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Veritas



Areas of Operations Covered in this *Veritas*...



Cover Photo: Army logistics in World War II was a contrast in ancient and modern techniques. The terrain and weather conditions often dictated the use of Quartermaster Pack units, with mules and horses, to supply Army units. In Italy a soldier rides a supply-laden mule down a mud-choked road, past a convoy of 2½ ton trucks. Special Forces resurrected the practice during the opening days of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM in Afghanistan. (*Center for Military History photo*).

ERRATA from *Veritas* Vo. 5 No. 2, 2009:



p. 34: Bottom left photo: Identification of PVT Karel P. Pesata, second from left, in "Lodge Act recruits at the Greyhound Bus terminal after a day of sightseeing in Boston. The train was also popular."



p. 41: Bottom right photo, further identifications: L1 SSG Henry T. "Harry" Belton; L2 SGT Martin Urich; L3 SGT Harris Cawley; CPT Carl Bergstrom; SFC Antonio "Tony" Zarba.

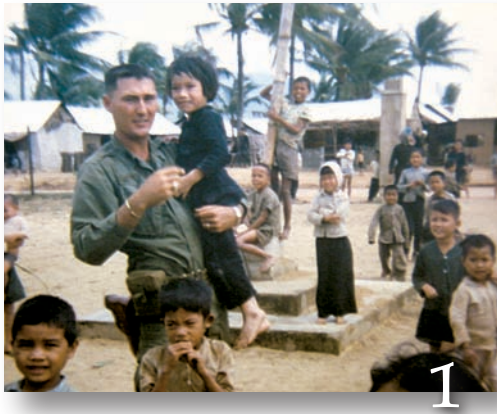


p. 42 Center left photo caption should read: "Josef Masin (far right) and Milan Paumer (2nd from right) pose with Lodge Act friends (L2 Pokorny and L3 Prusik) in front of the 77th SFG Gymnasium sign on Smoke Bomb Hill, Fort Bragg, NC."



Cover-top right corner & p. 44 bottom right photo caption should read:

"Andre Vasilev Carson, far left, front row, a Lodge Act soldier serving as a safehouse operator, poses with FA 68, 10th SFG during one of CPT Herbert Brucker's E&E exercises in Bavaria." Further identifications: Back row (L to R): MSG Charles F. Williams; CPT David B. Clark; SGT Henry G. Bertrand; SP1 Harold B. Hollowell; Front row (L to R): SP1 Andre Vasilev Carson (safe house operator); SP1 Fred E. Hinkley; PFC Richard D. Frederick.



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IBC Books in the Field

The Azimuth of the USASOC History Office



We are on schedule with this third quarterly issue of *Veritas*. Funding has been approved for the ARSOF Senior Leader Papers Repository and Archives. Construction completion is early May 2010. The facility will be physically joined to the USASOC History Office in Building D-1930, Desert Storm Drive. The dedication will be done in conjunction with the new USASOC Memorial Wall. The USAJFKSWCS Archives personnel (3) will be assigned to the USASOC History Office effective 1 October 2009, but will not relocate until late spring 2010. The title "ARSOF Senior Leader" encompasses general, field grade, and warrant officers, senior non-commissioned officers, and veterans.

While serving ARSOF soldiers continue to be exceptionally supportive of the USASOC History Office collection efforts, we also want to thank the 41st Civil Affairs Company veterans, Andrew Mousalimas (OSS Greek OG), and MARS Task Force Mountain Artillery Association (Randall Colvin and W.B. Woodruff, Jr.) for donating documents, photos, and records. Our handling policy when ARSOF veterans or family members agree to have photos, documents, and memorabilia copied/scanned/photographed is simply a "chain of custody" process. Here's how it works: we provide our FedEx

account number (solid tracking system) with a specific address and mailing instructions; the veteran emails or calls to tell us that his materials have been shipped; we acknowledge receipt by email or phone to start the "chain of custody"; once received, we scan/copy/photograph the materials and make an extra CD; we then FedEx the materials and CD back to the veteran and email or call him to tell him that his "treasure" is on the way home. The veteran can "track" his package online if he wants. He calls or emails us confirming receipt to close the "chain of custody."

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Child mortality rate
in the Montagnard
villages was 70-80
percent from birth
to 10 years old.

We would focus on
children's cleanliness,
said First Lieutenant
(1LT) Andrew Lattu.

Battle Without Bullets

The 41st Civil Affairs
Company in Vietnam -
Part I: 1965-1967

by Troy J. Sacquety

"A Peace Corps with rifles. That is one of the nicer names for the hog raisers, school marms, latrine builders, well diggers, medicinemen, and soldiers who constitute the 41st Civil Affairs Company."¹

The 41st was one of only three Civil Affairs (CA) companies to serve in the Republic of Vietnam (RVN) [the others were the 2nd and 29th], and did so from 1965 to 1970. Its mission was to bolster faith in the RVN government by helping to "win the hearts and minds" of the rural population by assisting with construction, agricultural, medical, economic, and educational programs to improve standards of living. It is beyond the scope of a single article to present all 41st CA Company activities because each of the far-flung Teams has its own story. This two-part article will introduce the 41st to today's ARSOF soldiers by providing the company's mission, force structure, general history, and having some of the CA soldiers explain their work. Part I spans the Company's arrival in Vietnam in 1965 through 1967. Part II will describe operations from the 1968 Tet Offensive until the 41st deactivation in Vietnam in 1970. The important message is that the 41st Civil Affairs Company persevered in the face of innumerable obstacles and made a difference. As ARSOF is challenged today to win non-violent victories worldwide, it is important to remember what the 41st CA Company accomplished forty years ago in an equally challenging environment.

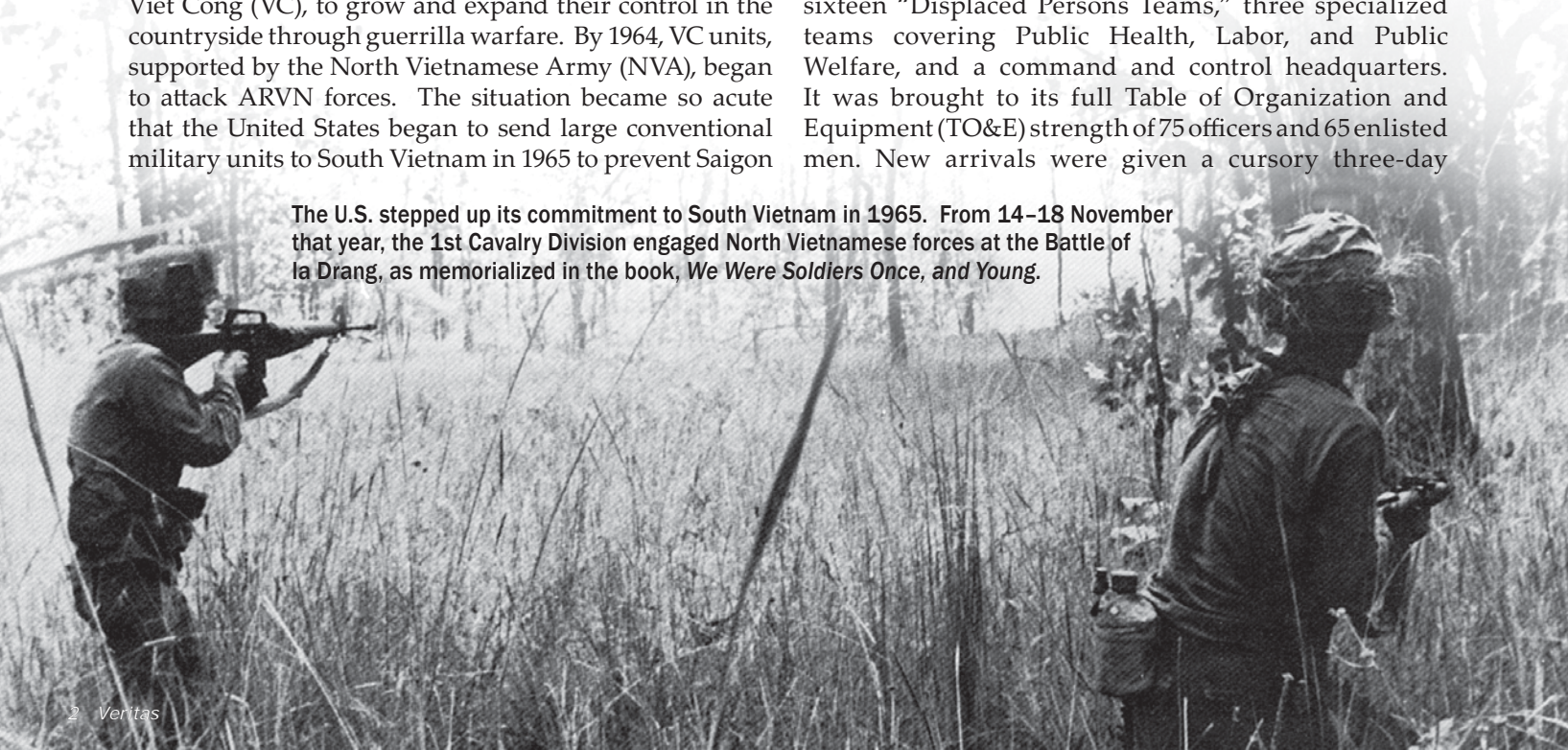
The war in Vietnam was escalating in the early 1960s. Created to fight a conventional war and mirrored after the conventional U.S. Army, the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) was plagued by corruption and weak leadership. These factors encouraged the loosely-organized South Vietnamese Communist movement, the Viet Cong (VC), to grow and expand their control in the countryside through guerrilla warfare. By 1964, VC units, supported by the North Vietnamese Army (NVA), began to attack ARVN forces. The situation became so acute that the United States began to send large conventional military units to South Vietnam in 1965 to prevent Saigon

from falling. That year, the U.S. Army fought its first large-scale battles in Vietnam. But in reality, there were two wars ongoing in Vietnam: a conventional war against NVA-trained VC Main Force battalions; and a counter-insurgency war against the VC guerrilla units countryside.² U.S. Army Special Forces had been engaged in South Vietnam since 1960, but early Civil Affairs efforts were only cursory.

Individual officer advisors and Mobile Training Teams (MTTs) constituted the initial U.S. Army CA commitment to South Vietnam. Some of these MTTs recommended a larger CA role.³ Though two-man CA Teams were an integral part of Special Forces "B" detachments in country, they were only making a token effort at civil assistance.⁴ It was 1965 before the U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV), the unified command for all U.S. forces in Vietnam, requested a permanent American CA presence. The civilian U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) was in charge of the major civilian assistance programs. This changed with the MACV request.

On 27 August 1965, the 41st CA Company, 95th Civil Affairs Group at Fort Gordon, Georgia, was alerted for deployment.⁵ Its only previous operational experience had come earlier that year when small elements were attached to the 42nd Civil Affairs Company in the Dominican Republic. However, the lessons learned in Santa Domingo had little application for Vietnam. To satisfy MACV guidance, the 41st reorganized into sixteen "Displaced Persons Teams," three specialized teams covering Public Health, Labor, and Public Welfare, and a command and control headquarters. It was brought to its full Table of Organization and Equipment (TO&E) strength of 75 officers and 65 enlisted men. New arrivals were given a cursory three-day

The U.S. stepped up its commitment to South Vietnam in 1965. From 14–18 November that year, the 1st Cavalry Division engaged North Vietnamese forces at the Battle of Ia Drang, as memorialized in the book, *We Were Soldiers Once, and Young*.





An idealized view of Civil Affairs.



Unofficial pocket patch of the 41st Civil Affairs Company.

course at the U.S. Army Civil Affairs School.⁶ Second Lieutenant (2LT) Lawrence A. Castagneto recalled that the training they received before deployment was based on WWII Military Government models that were not very applicable to Vietnam. Unit members were told that they “were going to be part of MACV . . . but the intent was to support the infantry and work with the civilians,” recalled 2LT Castagneto.⁷

The 41st CA main body sailed for Vietnam on 1 December 1965 aboard the USNS *General Leroy El Tinge*. It was a “one stack [WWII] Liberty ship. . . it was rock and roll the whole time . . . we were getting about an eight-foot swell in from the port side and that thing rolled from San Diego to Guam, which was about 20 days,” recalled 2LT Castagneto. The unit arrived at Nha Trang in late December to establish their home in the large tent city.⁹ Individual teams soon left for their assignments elsewhere.

Teams from the 41st CA Company were deployed within three of Vietnam’s four Corps areas. They were often parceled out and “attached for operational control, administration and logistics,” to American combat units or MACV Advisory Teams.¹⁰ The 2nd, 7th, and 14th CA Teams were sent to the 1st Infantry Division in III Corps. Four Teams (3, 5, 10, 16) were provided to the III Marine Amphibious Force in I Corps.¹¹ The remaining nine CA Teams supported First Field Force, Vietnam (I FFV) units in II Corps.¹² Spread all over South Vietnam, Company administration of the units was chaotic.

For example, at various times in 1966, the CA Teams in II Corps were attached to the 101st Airborne Division (Teams 9, 15), 4th Infantry Division (Teams 8, 9), 1st Cavalry Division (Teams 4, 6, 11, and 12), 25th Infantry Division (Team 1), and the 5th Special Forces Group (Teams 12, 13). The Company headquarters and Public Health, Labor, and Public Welfare Teams remained at Camp John F. McDermott in Nha Trang.¹³ Because the CA ‘Generalist’ Teams were so dispersed, the 41st headquarters was only able to administer its units in II Corps. The Teams in the other Corps areas got short-

Civil Affairs Curriculum School Course

The CA curriculum school course changed little in the early years of Vietnam. Military Intelligence officer 1LT Lee Livingston, (1966-1967), said that the “CA school focused on the WWII military government examples on one end of the spectrum and on self-help village health/food/transportation issues at the other end of the spectrum . . . We discussed in some detail the British lessons in Malaya.” Livingston added, “I don’t recall during my year in Vietnam where I said, ‘Oh yeah, I remember that from CA school’ . . . there was no Civil Affairs instruction manual, no chart, no list of things to see or do . . . It was all OJT [On-The Job Training] after I got there.” But, Livingston said, “The self-help message stuck. Let them do it, just help.”⁸



Left: 1LT Lee Livingston was a Military Intelligence officer assigned to the 41st.

Below: Students learned what a typical village should look like with this table model at the Civil Affairs School.



Relocation



Newly-relocated Montagnards faced a future that was far different from their traditional ways.



In 1965-66, villagers were relocated from their homes into "Strategic Hamlets." The intent was to cut the civilians off from the VC and allow "free fire zones" in the countryside.



The crossbow was a traditional hunting instrument among the Montagnards.



Relocation camps often lacked even basic necessities. The 41st did what it could to provide rudimentary washing facilities.

Villagers newly-arrived at a relocation camp were often confused and had only what they could carry with them.



Newly-relocated civilians lived in primitive housing (as evidenced by the tarps). One mission of the 41st CA was to help provide better housing.





The headquarters of the 41st Civil Affairs Company at Nha Trang in 1966. The unit's unofficial patch is on the left, while the SSI for U.S. Army Vietnam, (USARV) is on the right. USARV was a component command of Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV), and controlled all the Army's logistics and service units.

changed. The CA Teams faced other dilemmas apart from a lack of administrative support.

Throughout the war, few leaders in the American or Vietnamese military understood CA.¹⁴ Multiple government and non-government organizations from both countries were involved in "Civic Action" pacification programs to improve the image of the South Vietnamese regime among the people and reduce the VC influence.¹⁵ Unfortunately, none of them were coordinated let alone integrated. While Civic Action was a long-term program, the 41st Civil Affairs Company's role in the "restoration process" was tactical; to get the locals immediate assistance and to encourage them to help themselves.¹⁶ The military understanding at the time was that Civic Action did not mean "Westernizing, it meant improving social standards, environment and health."¹⁷ The goal was to encourage the people to rely upon themselves and the South Vietnamese government until the 41st "worked themselves out of a job."¹⁸ To accomplish this mission, the unit was to provide direct support to the major U.S. tactical units and province advisory teams.¹⁹ This was easier said than done.

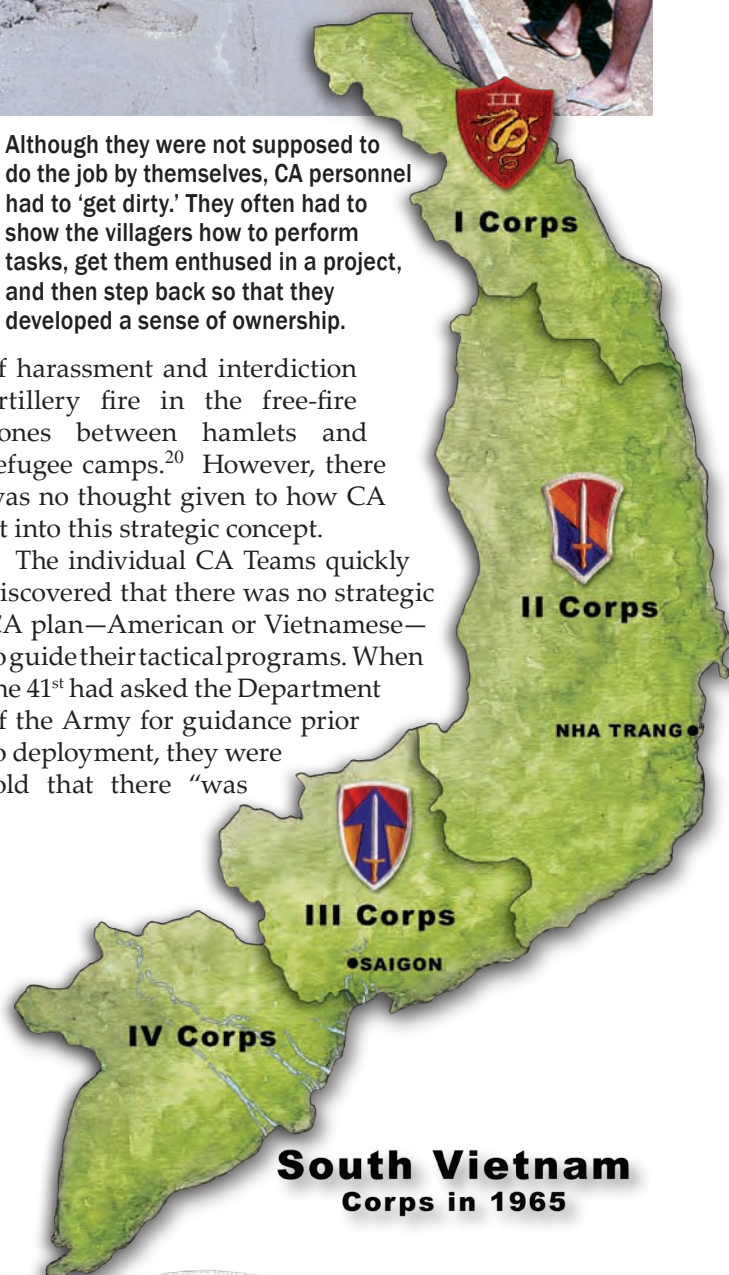
When the Company arrived in Vietnam, refugee relocation and assistance supported the "Strategic Hamlet" program. This entailed resettling ethnic Montagnards from remote areas in the countryside to centrally-located camps/hamlets. Saigon touted relocation as a means to reduce VC support. It also facilitated the employment



Although they were not supposed to do the job by themselves, CA personnel had to 'get dirty.' They often had to show the villagers how to perform tasks, get them enthused in a project, and then step back so that they developed a sense of ownership.

of harassment and interdiction artillery fire in the free-fire zones between hamlets and refugee camps.²⁰ However, there was no thought given to how CA fit into this strategic concept.

The individual CA Teams quickly discovered that there was no strategic CA plan—American or Vietnamese—to guide their tactical programs. When the 41st had asked the Department of the Army for guidance prior to deployment, they were told that there "was



Military Assistance Command, Vietnam SSI



United States Army, Vietnam SSI



I Field Force, Vietnam SSI



II Field Force, Vietnam SSI



III Marine Amphibious Force SSI

41ST CA COMPANY LOCATIONS

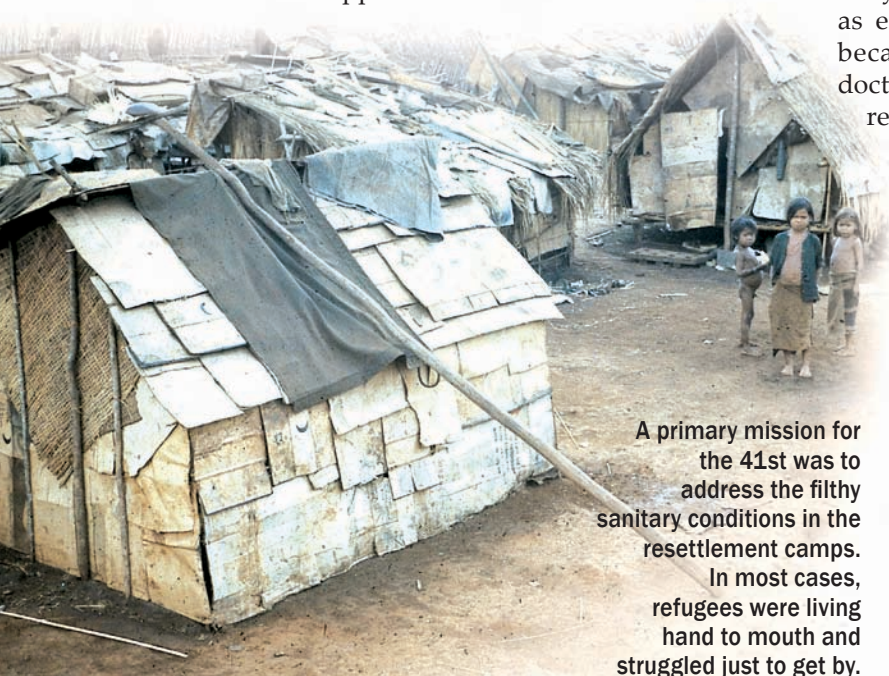
CORPS	TEAM	ATTACHED TO	LOCATION	YEAR
I Corps	3	III Marine Amphibious Force	Quang Tri/Gio Linh	1966
	5	III Marine Amphibious Force	Quang Ngai (Mo Duc)	
	10	III Marine Amphibious Force	Tam Ky	
	16	III Marine Amphibious Force	Da Nang	
II Corps	9	1 st Bde 101 Abn (then MACV Sector advisory Team #39)	Phan Rang (then 4 ID)	
	15	101 st Abn (Brigade HQ)	Tuy Hoa	
	4	1 st Cav	An Soc (Phan Thiet)	
	6, 11	1 st Cav		
	12	1 st Cav (5 th SFG)		
	1	3 rd Bde, 25 th ID	Pleiku Province	
	8	MACV Advisory Group (SF DET 221) (4 th ID)	Phu Yen (Cung Son)	
	13	MACV Advisory Group (DET B-24 5 th SFG)	Binh Dinh (Kontum)	
	9	4 th ID		
	12	5 th SFG, DET B-22 (DET B-23)	Binh Dinh (Ban Me Thuot)	
III Corps	2, 7, 14	1 st ID		

no mission statement available.”²¹ 2LT Castagneto said “We never got any specific instructions” when his Team reported to their combat unit, two or three weeks after arriving in Vietnam.²² Team leaders often developed programs based on local needs and conditions and the expertise available to them. The individual CA Teams learned to be very resourceful. Wheedling supplies from salvage yards was a constant. The 41st was a low-priority unit charged with a multitude of non-warfighting tasks and normal supply channels were not prepared to support unusual requests.

Captain (CPT) Michael D. Sparago, a medical officer on Team 1 with 2LT Castagnato (supporting the 1st Brigade, 25th Infantry Division) revealed his frustrations: “We would hold a sick call, treat a few people and then go back [return to base]. It was exactly the wrong way to do it . . . there was no follow-up . . . it was a useless effort simply because of the lack of continuity . . . Any good will was gone in 5 seconds when the VC came in and confiscated all the medical supplies we left.”²³

The 1966 end of year unit report reflected the 41st’s predicament: “That the Company acquitted itself in the face of loosely defined objectives and that many of its teams displayed remarkable talent for productive support of the overall mission did not lessen the need for a comprehensive mission statement and program.”²⁴ It was faint praise in a veiled comment. Not being part of a strategic plan had other drawbacks.

One negative impact was that without a specified mission they had no priority for support in MACV nor did the Company have any of the 16 authorized interpreters. This greatly reduced their ability to obtain more assistance from the local civilians and made it impossible to passively gather intelligence, a core function. CPT Sparago said that “we would communicate by gesture because nobody thought to put an interpreter with us . . . I could not elicit any [patient] history . . . 70-80% of the time your patient is telling you what is wrong with them. We had no way to do that.”²⁵ In a matter-of-fact report, the Company relayed; “In the CA function, interpreter personnel are as essential as rifles are to the infantryman.”²⁶ And, because of their “unsatisfactory utilization,” the 16 doctors assigned to the 41st Civil Affairs Company were reassigned to other units in June 1966. CPT Sparago was



A primary mission for the 41st was to address the filthy sanitary conditions in the resettlement camps.

In most cases, refugees were living hand to mouth and struggled just to get by.



Soldiers of the 1st Cavalry Division search a village in October 1966 during Operation IRVING. The 41st often conducted MEDCAPS in villages once they had been cleared by conventional forces.



Like soldiers everywhere, the 41st Teams drew kids like a magnet. Building rapport with the locals often began here.



1LT Andrew Lattu observed that one way to break the ice was to offer rides into town when possible.



CA Team leaders had to meet with the village elders on their terms, as does 1LT Wilber Stewart of Team 14.



In order to gain trust, CA personnel had to engage in the customs of the people. Among the Montagnards, this included communal drinking of rice wine as CPT John Schmidt demonstrates. If a CA member refused to drink when offered, it would have been seen as a great offense.

one of those transferred. His thoughts at the time were: "I had all sorts of training that was not being utilized. Perhaps, I could make a better contribution as part of the infantry battalion."²⁷ The yearly Company report for 1966 noted the loss: "In retrospect the enormous potential presented by the availability of 16 doctors should have been evident to those associated with civil affairs planning."²⁸ However, despite their difficulties, the 41st opened the door for other U.S. Army CA units. The 29th Civil Affairs Company arrived in Vietnam on 11 June 1966 and the 2nd Civil Affairs Company followed later in the year. They immediately faced similar tactical situations, notwithstanding the lack of CA doctrine.

There was no specified mission for a CA Team. The individual teams had to develop their own. At any given time, a CA Team could be assisting with road and bridge building; supervising well, spillway, school, or dispensary construction; teaching English classes; creating agricultural programs such as building fishponds, introducing new kinds of livestock, or providing immunizations; or even digging latrines that benefitted an entire community. What they did was often decided by community leaders and based on what expertise and capabilities the team possessed.

One of the most important and popular missions performed by the 41st Civil Affairs Company—and a good way to gain entrance into a village—was conducting Medical Civic Action Programs (MEDCAPs). These were a shock for soldiers who had just arrived from the United States. Health and sanitation practices in the villages were well below Western standards. In 1966, the Company reported: "The majority of the civilians treated had not previously been exposed to modern medical ideas and practices."²⁹ Local health problems were so acute that one of the doctors told CPT John Schmidt in 1966 that going on a MEDCAP was "the best training that we can get. We learn about diseases and skin ailments in medical school but most doctors can go their entire careers in the States and not see a case of leprosy."³⁰ MEDCAPs served two very important functions: they were often the only source of medical care; and their popularity raised the CA Teams' stature in the hamlets. Helping children was a top priority. They were the country's future.

"Child mortality rate in the Montagnard villages from birth to 10 years old was 70-80 percent. We would focus on children's cleanliness," said First Lieutenant (1LT) Andrew Lattu.³¹ "We washed thousands of kids and gave away thousands of bars of soap," recalled Schmidt.³² Along with improving sanitation, the Teams immunized the people against communicable diseases. MEDCAPs opened the door for the CA Teams to promote lasting projects in the hamlets. Gaining trust was the first step.

1LT Lattu observed: "They had seen the French come and go . . . we were greeted with a mixture of welcome and suspicion, certainly caution, until they got to know you a little better."³³ Once in the



When village elders asked for assistance constructing a meeting house, the 41st CA gladly responded. They helped the villagers to erect a showcase building. As the pictures show, it had a stout frame and its completion was celebrated with a dedication ceremony. Having a place to decide local affairs helped the villagers become more self-sufficient and weaned them away from VC influence.

village, the teams did a site survey to determine which projects were most needed, be it a school, clean drinking water, medical care, or agricultural improvements. The indigenous people had to accept ownership of the projects. Once that was done the teams were achieving their goal of helping the people become more self-sufficient.

From 1966 to 1969, when they first entered a village or refugee camp, the CA Teams were always security conscious. When the Teams had more freedom of movement in 1966-1967, they still never arrived at the same time or in sequential days. "I never visited the same project two days in a row," said 1LT Lattu.³⁴ These precautions reduced the threat of ambushes by the VC who were in the villages. CPT Sparago echoed these sentiments: "There was little trust . . . you would go into a village and the women and children were there, but the men gone. This was a tip-off to me that the village was not overly friendly."³⁵



An ongoing project for the 41st was to help the Vietnamese rebuild the war damage in their villages. The Teams funded and supervised the building of schools and repair of bridges, culverts, and roads. These projects helped the locals get produce to market, promoted

community interaction, and kept the children engaged. This was critical because most areas where the 41st CA Teams worked were very isolated. CA projects built community involvement, improved the local economy, showed that the government cared, and weakened VC influence. Infrastructure projects met immediate needs, but had lasting results.

1LT Lattu, a geologist by training, helped Montagnard villagers hand-dig a 60-foot well in 1967. While surveying the area, Lattu noticed a thick layer of firm, water-resistant volcanic ash in the canyons in the area. He knew that one had only to dig down to the ash layer because water "flowed on top of the ash."³⁶ When the U.S. 4th Infantry Division (4th ID) needed water to wash their vehicles, 1LT Lattu explained that their well site would require drilling more than 500 feet to hit water. But, the American engineers had a drill and liked their site. The competition began. The Montagnards dug their well by hand. They reached water at 62 feet and won. As Lattu had said, it took the 4th ID engineers 570 feet to hit water.³⁷ But, not all CA projects in the early years were a success.

With agriculture, short-term programs often did not work, nor were American methods always the best. This was particularly true when incompatible crop strains or livestock breeds were introduced. Team 9 at Edap Enang, a "model" resettlement center/village set up by the South Vietnamese government, had numerous setbacks like



Simple projects, such as this swing-set at Edap Enang, were easy ways to garner good will for the CA Teams.

MEDCAPS



MEDCAPS were an important contribution by the 41st CA and helped foster a sense of trust.



41st CA Teams had to be prepared to treat numerous medical problems while conducting MEDCAPS. Ailments could range from simple immunizations to skin ulcers.

A MEDCAP could be the only time that Vietnamese civilians in the countryside had ever seen a doctor or dentist. They were extremely popular programs.



One MEDCAP function was to administer immunizations to locals to prevent the spread of disease. Care was given to all, even if they were suspected of being VC, as was this patient.



Children were a MEDCAP target because the child mortality rate was so high.



The “Pot-Belly” pig is native to Vietnam and was often found by 41st CA Teams in the Montagnard villages. Although not large, they were well suited to the conditions and required little additional care or food.



In an attempt to introduce a larger and more prolific pig that would increase meat production, some CA Teams handed out hundreds of piglets of a different breed that had been shipped in from Saigon. But, unlike the pot-belly pigs, these finicky swine could not cope with the poor food and sanitary conditions. Most of them died or were slaughtered because they ate too much.



this. In late 1967, they planted hundreds of banana tree seedlings, only to watch them die during the dry season from a lack of irrigation. That same year, hundreds of piglets were shipped in from Saigon. Unlike the smaller breed raised by the Montagnards, these larger and more finicky swine could not adjust to the poor sanitation and having to scrounge for food scraps.³⁸ Civic Action in Vietnam underwent major organizational changes in 1967.

A significant operational change that year improved the effectiveness of the overall Civic Action program when the disparate efforts of the Department of State, USAID, Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and U.S. Army Civil Affairs were placed under a single joint military-civilian organization, the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) program.³⁹ This was a unique experiment in which “civilians were embedded within a wartime command and put in charge of military personnel and resources.”⁴⁰ CORDS brought more focus to the pacification effort in the countryside because its civilian heads, like Ambassador Robert William “Blowtorch Bob” Komer and future CIA director William E. Colby, had the equivalent of three-star general rank and reported directly to the MACV commander.⁴¹ Although the program came too late to fulfill all of its goals, CORDS was regarded as a success because it provided greater cohesiveness to the pacification effort. In conjunction with this move were changes at the CA team level. At Company level, the 41st Commander faced major chain of command issues.

Beginning in April 1967 most of the 41st CA Teams were reassigned from U.S. combat units to Vietnamese province and/or district headquarters to support the MACV Advisory Teams. Administration and



Former WWII Office of Strategic Services (OSS) Jedburgh and Norwegian Operational Group veteran William E. Colby, headed CORDS from 1968-1971. The future Director of Central Intelligence, inspects a U.S.-armed Revolutionary Development Team in Kien Hoa Province.

logistical support reverted back to the 41st Company headquarters. The change was directed because the frequent movements of the U.S. combat units had caused projects to be abandoned before completion or only partially implemented. Only CA Team 8 remained attached to the 4th U.S. Infantry Division at Pleiku.⁴² Adequate logistical support had always been problematic for CA.⁴³ Now, the 41st headquarters reorganized to accommodate the change.

The new organizational complexity dictated the creation of two subordinate headquarters detachments to handle CA administration in II Corps. Detachment C at Qui Nhon supported Teams 1, 6, 11, 13, 14, and 15. Detachment B at Phan Thiet, supported Teams 2, 4, 7, and 12. Both detachment headquarters relocated to Nha Trang in April 1968 after the Tet Offensive was finally halted.⁴⁴ Of the original three specialty teams collocated with the Headquarters at Nha Trang, only the Public Health Team remained intact. Its role was to procure medical supplies for all teams, support health and sanitation programs in the Nha Trang area, and to inspect local restaurants.⁴⁵ The headquarters modified its structure to support the logistics needs of the widely dispersed CA Teams. A Civilian Supply Team and an Area Survey Team was created using the underutilized Public Welfare and Labor Teams.

1LT Elmer M. Pence, the first head of the Civilian Supply Team recalled that they “were supposed to get supplies from all the major civilian organizations like USAID, and send them out to the teams in the field. . . it was really haphazard.”⁴⁶ He recalled that “most of the time, I ran it out by truck, and if not, I had to kiss someone’s a** over at the Air Force to get a Caribou [C-7] to fly it out.”⁴⁷ Taking supplies by road was dangerous. Pence recalled: “We took the governor off the trucks and drove as fast as we could. A couple of times, there were bullet holes in the truck.”⁴⁸

1LT Pence was resourceful and got what supplies he could. “I was the biggest scrounger in the world.” For

Sanitation

The 41st supervised the digging of wells to give villages clean water.



The 41st CA Teams built numerous infirmaries in the relocation/refugee camps. Staffed by locals trained by the CA Teams, they served to provide basic medical care to the community.

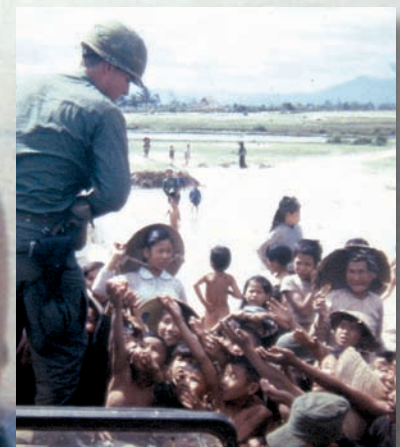
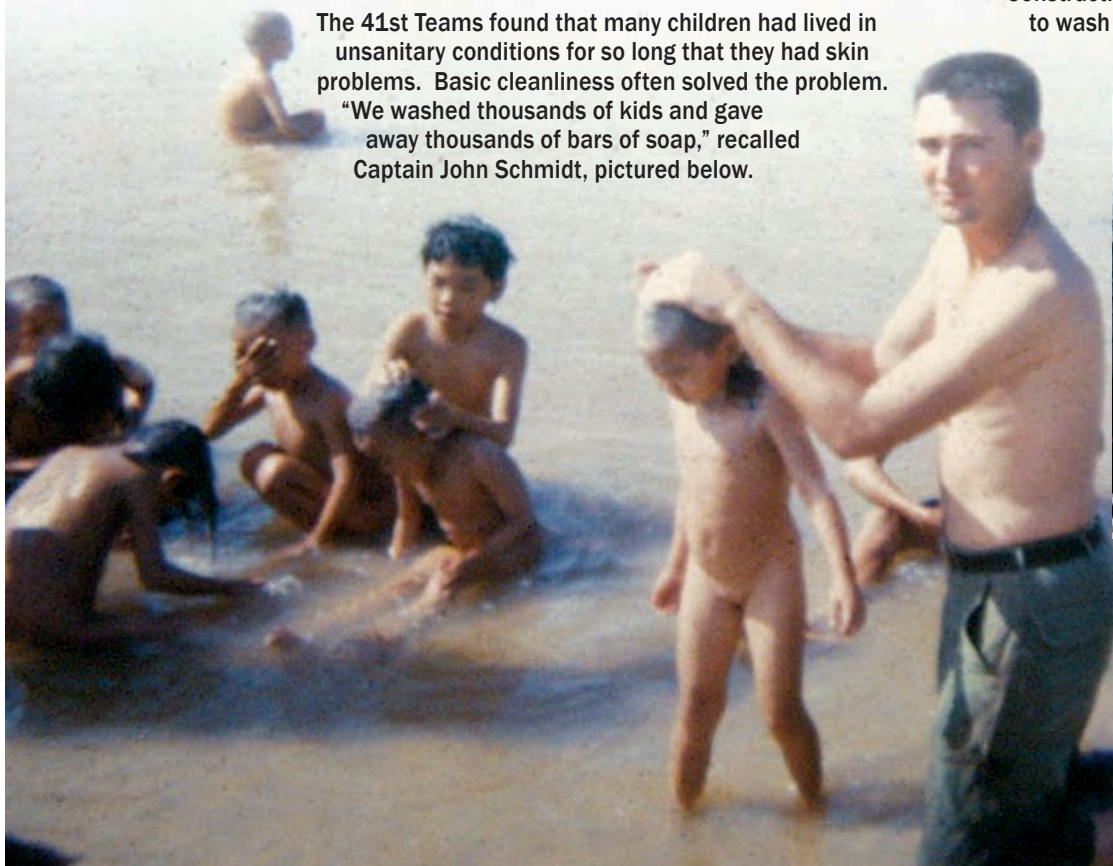


Some 41st CA Teams dammed creeks to create a swimming hole for children. Although simple, they helped to keep the children clean, and earned the CA Teams tremendous goodwill among the population.



Constructing spillways gave villagers a place to wash themselves and their clothes, and the children a place to play.

The 41st Teams found that many children had lived in unsanitary conditions for so long that they had skin problems. Basic cleanliness often solved the problem. "We washed thousands of kids and gave away thousands of bars of soap," recalled Captain John Schmidt, pictured below.



The CA Teams passed out bars of soap to help parents make sure that their children remained clean.



Acclaimed author John E. Steinbeck (front right) toured Vietnam on behalf of the newspaper *Newsday* in 1967. While there, he visited one of the 41st CA Teams.



With a simple plan, 1LT Patrick S. Brady developed a lasting program. His German Dodge Ball league was running without assistance years after its creation.

instance, the teams requested non-authorized weapons. Pence recalled “I dealt with a guy over at Special Forces. They had warehouses full of [M-1] carbines and M-3 Greaseguns. I could get all of those that I wanted.” One of his most useful tools for trading for supplies was liquor. The Air Force flew in bootleg liquor from the Philippines,



Because it was a low-priority unit, 41st personnel often had to scrounge materials for their projects. Sheet metal, lumber, and concrete had to be begged, borrowed, or appropriated.

and he had “an ample supply. That was always good trading material.” Pence said “The Colonel said just don’t get me sent to Leavenworth . . . He wanted to follow procedure to get things for people, but if you tried to do it with paperwork it was fruitless. He allowed me a little latitude . . . as long as I did not cause any trouble.” However, most Teams were responsible for the majority of their logistics. This is because of “the problem of trying to get the supplies out to them.”⁴⁹

After two full years in Vietnam, the 41st Civil Affairs Company still faced the same dilemmas. Neither the U.S., nor South Vietnamese Army leadership understood how to employ CA. And, there still was no strategic plan to implement programs nation-wide. But, the 41st was succeeding at the tactical level. On the ground, the Company had begun the process of winning hearts and minds, which contributed to offsetting VC influence. As an example, 1LT Patrick S. Brady, a Military Intelligence officer with Team 7 at Phan Thiet in 1967, found that he

41ST CA COMPANY LOCATIONS

CORPS	TEAM	ATTACHED TO	LOCATION	YEAR
I Corps	3	29 th CA Co	Da Nang	1967
	5	29 th CA Co	Quang Ngai	
	10	29 th CA Co	Tam Ky	
	16	29 th CA Co	Da Nang	
II Corps	1	3 rd Bde 25 th Inf Div	I Corps (Duc Pho)	
	4	41 st CA Co	Phan Thiet	
	6	1 st Cav Div	An Khe	
	8	4 th ID	Oasis	
	9	41 st CA Co (4 th ID)	Thnah An (Edap Enang)	
	11	41 st CA Co	Phu My	
	12	41 st CA Co	An Khe (Phan Thiet)	
	13	41 st CA Co	Bong Son	
	15	1 st Bde 101 st Abn	I Corps	
	(14)	(41 st CA Co)	(I Corps Duc Pho)	
III Corps	2	2 nd Bde 1 st ID (41 st CA)	Phu Loi (Ban Me Thuot)	
	7	3 rd Bde 1 st ID (41 st CA)	Lai Khe (Phan Thiet)	
	14	1 st Bde 1 st ID (41 st CA)	Di An (Nha Trang)	

was not able to do his intended job. Instead, he decided to do something useful. He developed a wildly successful German Dodge Ball league for the local Vietnamese boys. He chose the game because it did not require much in the way of equipment, space, or training. Brady received a letter in 1972 from Jeffrey L. Ashley, a former 41st CA medic, then back in Vietnam as a civilian. He wrote to Brady that the games were still “the very most popular” and that “several hundred, perhaps thousands of children in Vietnam, are glad and thankful, without knowing it, that you were selected to spend some of your time in their proximity.”⁵⁰ Clearly, on the tactical level, the 41st was making a difference.

This was accomplished through perseverance by dedicated soldiers who, without a specific mission, took it upon themselves to do what was necessary. By 1968, the 41st CA Company had been credited with “winning significant victories without firing a shot” as they battled to rebuild a nation “under fire.”⁵¹ This proved acceptable until the 1968 Tet Offensive led to major changes in focus. How the 41st CA adjusted to the post-Tet environment until its disbandment in 1970 will be the subject of Part II. ♣

I would like to thank the veterans of the 41st Civil Affairs Company who provided their time and materials for this article. In particular, Elmer M. Pence, John Schmidt, Larry A. Castagnato, Lee Livingston, Gary Faith, Patrick S. Brady, Jimmy Gonzalez, David Gunn, David Forbes, David Schaffner, Ronald Matheson, Earl Palmer, Ivars Bemberis, Darrell Buffaloe, David Clark, Dr. Michael D. Sparago, and Andrew Lattu went out of their way to answer questions and furnish photographs. The 41st CA Company maintains a website at <http://www.41stcivilaffairs.com/>

Troy J. Sacquety earned an MA from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln and his PhD in Military History from Texas A&M University. Prior to joining the USASOC History Office staff he worked several years for the Central Intelligence Agency. Current research interests include Army and Office of Strategic Services (OSS) special operations during World War II, and Special Operations units in Vietnam.

Endnotes

- 1 SP4 C. Blair Kenagy, “Peace Corps With Rifles,” (1969) copy provided by the 41st Civil Affairs Company veteran’s association, copy in USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
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Projects of the 41st Civil Affairs Company in 1967

<i>Project</i>	<i>Completed</i>	<i>Repaired</i>
Schools	10	22
Latrines	36	
Wells	44	28
Bridges	30	12
Culverts	65	
Roads	7	12
Dwellings	1,271	
Dispensaries	6	2
Playgrounds	22	5
Protective Fences	22	5
Information Boards	13	
Spillways	11	2
Dams	3	1
Public Buildings	5	1
Irrigation	2	
Drainage	7	

Total MEDCAP patients:	276,240
Total Immunizations:	16,769
Decontamination Showers:	8,628
Total Medical Treatments:	301,637

Items Distributed

<i>Item</i>	<i>Number</i>
Cement	1,343,830 lbs
Lumber	177,300 board feet
Tin	19,303 sheets
Nails	1,072 lbs
Barbed Wire	53 rolls
Soap	39,453 bars
Clothing	39,487 lbs
Food	2,227,452 lbs
Candy	39,487 bars

- 6 “Unit History 1 January 1965 to 31 December 1965,” Posted by David Gunn on Flickr, <http://www.flickr.com/photos/dgunn/2596504675/in/set-72157605671591016/>, accessed on 30 June 2009.
- 7 Lawrence Castagneto interview by Dr. Troy J. Sacquety, 13 June 2009, Redding, CA, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 8 Lee Livingston email to Dr. Troy J. Sacquety, 1 April 2009, subject: Civil Affairs School, 1966, Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
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- 12 General Orders 2277, 31 December 1965, Headquarters, United States Army Vietnam, copy provided by the 41st Civil Affairs Association and residing in USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC. **Initially the teams had an assigned medical doctor. However by mid-1966 they were deemed underutilized and stripped out of the unit for use elsewhere.**

- 13 CPT Akerlow, 2LT Liddle, and SP4 McAdoo, "A History of the 41st Civil Affairs Company; 1LT W.H. Smith to CG II Field Force Vietnam, "Attachment of CA Teams," 24 July 1966, F 40 "41st CA Company Readings, 66-70," Box 32, Civil Affairs Vietnam 1970-73, ARSOF Archives, JFK Special Warfare Museum.
- 14 LTC Johnnie Forte interview by CPT Thomas E. Ross, 13th Military History Detachment, Nha Trang, Vietnam, [late 1969], USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 15 MAJ Johnnie Forte Jr., "Operational Report: Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 41st Civil Affairs Company, Period Ending 31 July, 1969," 19 November 1969, F 54, Box 27, Civil Affairs Vietnam 1969-5, ARSOF Archives, JFK Special Warfare Museum. CPT Akerlow, 2LT Liddle, and SP4 McAdoo, "A History of the 41st Civil Affairs Company,"; **CA platoons assigned to divisions were attached to the G-5 section.** LTC Jonnie Forte interview by CPT Thomas E. Ross, 13th Military History Detachment, Nha Trang, Vietnam, [late 1969], USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 16 CPT Clarke, "Historical Project," 25 January 1974, JFK Special Warfare Museum.
- 17 COL Ronald A. Shackleton, *Village Defense: Initial Special Forces Operations in Vietnam* (Arvada, CO: Phoenix Press, 1975), 124.
- 18 MAJ Johnnie Forte, Jr., "Operational Report of the 41st Civil Affairs Company for Period Ending 31 July 1969, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)," 19 August 1969, 41st CA Company Report: OPS Jul 69, F 54, Civil Affairs Vietnam 1969-5, Box 27, ARSOF Archives, JFK Special Warfare Center, Fort Bragg, NC.
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- 20 For more information on the Harassment and Interdiction Fire mission, see John M. Hawkins, "The Costs of Artillery: Eliminating Harassment and Interdiction Fire During the Vietnam War," *The Journal of Military History* 1 (70) (January 2006): 91-122.
- 21 "Unit History 1 January 1965 to 31 December 1965," Posted by David Gunn on Flickr, <http://www.flickr.com/photos/dgunn/2596504829/in/set-72157605671591016/>, accessed on 30 June 2009.
- 22 Castagneto interview.
- 23 Dr. Michael Sparago, telephone interview by Dr. Troy J. Sacquety, 14 July 2009, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files.
- 24 CPT Charles W. Akerlow, 2LT Larry F. Liddle, and SP4 Richard W. McAdoo, "A History of the 41st Civil Affairs Company (1 Jan 1966 to 31 Dec 1966," copy provided by the 41st Civil Affairs Company Association and held in the USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, N.C.
- 25 Sparago interview.
- 26 CPT Akerlow, 2LT Liddle, and SP4 McAdoo, "A History of the 41st Civil Affairs Company."
- 27 Sparago interview.
- 28 CPT Akerlow, 2LT Liddle, and SP4 McAdoo, "A History of the 41st Civil Affairs Company."
- 29 CPT Akerlow, 2LT Liddle, and SP4 McAdoo, "A History of the 41st Civil Affairs Company."



The Communist Tet Offensive, reflected in this rocket attack on Da Nang airbase on 30 January 1968, caught Allied forces by surprise. Although the attacks ultimately decimated the VC, they were a tremendous psychological victory because the American public watching television became fully aware that the war was far from over.



- 30 John Schmidt talk, 2008 41st Civil Affairs Reunion, 14 June 2008, San Antonio, TX, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 31 Andrew Lattu talk, 2008 41st Civil Affairs Reunion, 14 June 2008, San Antonio, TX, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 32 Schmidt talk, 2008 41st Civil Affairs Reunion, 14 June 2008.
- 33 Andrew Lattu talk, 2008 41st Civil Affairs Reunion, 14 June 2008.
- 34 Andrew Lattu talk, 2008 41st Civil Affairs Reunion, 14 June 2008.
- 35 Sparago interview.
- 36 Lattu talk, 2008 41st Civil Affairs Reunion, 14 June 2008.
- 37 Lattu talk, 2008 41st Civil Affairs Reunion, 14 June 2008.
- 38 1LT Edward P. Ruminski, "Edap Enang Resettlement Center, Pleiku Province, Team #9, 41st Civil Affairs Company," July 1968, F 15, Box 19, Civil Affairs Vietnam 1968-2, ARSOF Archives, JFK Special Warfare Museum.
- 39 **Department of State records often referred to the organization as the Civil Operations and Rural Development Support (CORDS).**
- 40 Dale Andrade and James H. Willbanks, "CORDS/Phoenix: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Vietnam for the Future," *Military Review* (March-April 2006), 14.
- 41 CPT R. W. Miller, "41st Civil Affairs Company," *The Typhoon*, July 1968, 16, 1LT John F. Seiber, Annual Supplement, History of the 41st Civil Affairs Company, 1 January 1968-31 December 1968," copy in USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 42 CPT Clarke, "Historical Project," 25 January 1974. **In 1968, the 41st began calling its teams "platoons." Team 9 was pulled back in late 1968, leaving Team 8 the only one assigned to the 4th Infantry Division.**
- 43 1LT Richard W. Foster and SP4 Robert C. Holloway, "History of the 41st Civil Affairs CO (1 Jan 1967 to 31 Dec 1967), Posted by David Gunn on Flickr, <http://www.flickr.com/photos/dgunn/2597374222/in/set-72157605671591016/>, accessed on 1 July 2009.
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- 46 Elmer Pence, telephone interview by Dr. Troy J. Sacquety, 23 July 2009, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files.
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- 48 Pence interview.
- 49 Pence interview.
- 50 Patrick Brady, email to Dr. Troy J. Sacquety, 28 July 2008, Subject: Leaflets, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 51 CPT R.W. Miller, "41st Civil Affairs Company," *The Typhoon*, July 1968, 16.

1st LT Elmer M. Pence was the first commander of the Civilian Supply Team. It was based at Nha Trang with the Public Health Team.

The 41st Civil Affairs Company Headquarters was located in the coastal city of Nha Trang.





VALIANT 41: 160th SOAR in Combat in Iraq.

by Kenneth Finlayson



Objective DOMINION PINE was located to the east of Lake Thar Thar, north of Baghdad. In the upper left is the 160th SOAR DUI.

**USSOCOM PAO guidance on current operations dictate the use of pseudonyms for all SOF personnel, Major and below. In this article aircraft call signs, and the objective name are also pseudonyms.*

The recovery of an aircraft downed due to mechanical failure or enemy fire is a major event that tests the capacity any aviation unit. The Night Stalkers of the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (SOAR) routinely fly missions deep into enemy territory where the recovery of a disabled helicopter is a high-risk endeavor. In November 2006, members of the 1st Battalion, 160th SOAR were forced to extract a downed aircraft in the midst of a ferocious firefight with insurgents deep in the Iraqi desert. The courage and professionalism of the Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOFF) personnel, both on the ground and in the air, were instrumental in the successful recovery of the aircraft in the face of a determined enemy attack.

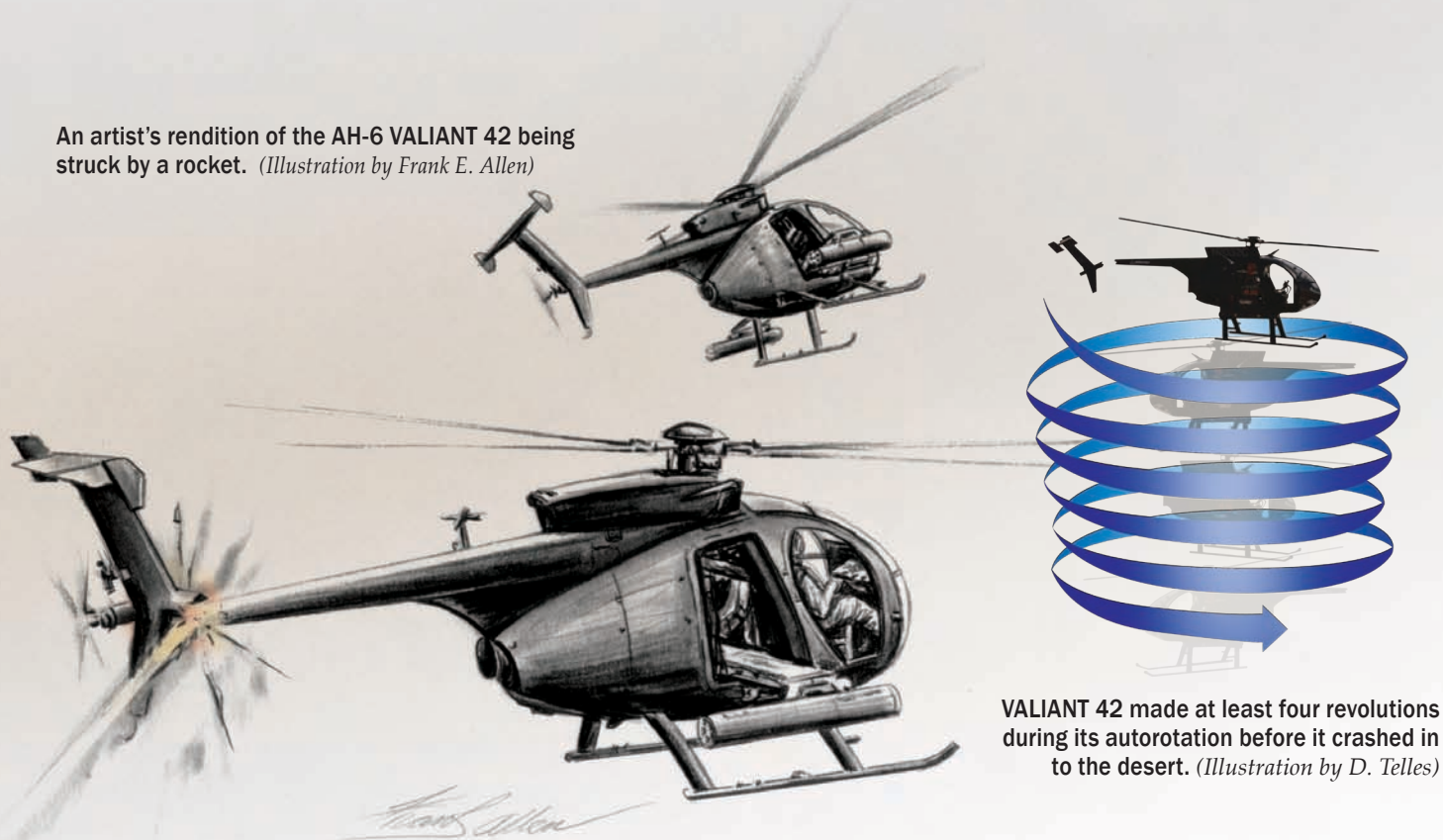
On 27 November 2006, elements of the 160th SOAR provided aviation support to ARSOFF elements with a mission to interdict a high value target in a remote location in the vicinity of Lake Thar Thar, north of Baghdad, Iraq. The mission was to intercept the target vehicle and its passengers when it was in the vicinity of a building known as Objective DOMINION PINE*. The 160th SOAR assets in the task force were two AH-6 Little Bird gunships (call signs VALIANT* 41 and 42), two MH-6 Little Bird lift helicopters (GALAHAD* 71/72) each with two ARSOFF soldiers on board, and two MH-60K Black Hawks (PALADIN* 65/66), each carrying 9 ARSOFF

troops of the ground assault element. The task force left Balad Air Base at 11:38 am local time on 27 November for the 65-mile flight to the objective.

The Ground Force Commander (GFC) Major (MAJ) Dillon Teriault* determined that the best opportunity to intercept the target was when the vehicle and its occupants were moving away from Objective DOMINION PINE*. To accomplish this, Teriault decided to land the task force at a *laager* site about nine miles from the objective area and shut down the helicopters to conserve fuel.¹ Reaching the *laager* site around 1200, MAJ Teriault discovered that the site was unsuitable due its close proximity to civilian buildings. "Since the plan was to shut down engines and prepare to wait for an extended period of time, we needed a more secure location," noted Teriault.² The two MH-60s had landed and at approximately 12:05 pm, the Black Hawks lifted off and joined the four Little Birds heading north to secure a better site. In the next five minutes, the situation would change drastically.

At 12:10, as the flight headed for the new location, the crew of the AH-6 VALIANT 42 felt a violent shuddering in the tail of the aircraft. Struck by a Rocket-Propelled Grenade (RPG), VALIANT 42 suffered a catastrophic tail rotor failure. Exceptionally skillful flying brought the aircraft down in the desert in a controlled crash. When the helicopter lost its tail rotor, it began to spin around beneath the rotors. Called "autorotating," this occurs when the stabilizing influence of the tail rotor is lost.³ The Little Bird spun counter-clockwise several times before crashing onto the desert floor. The pilot Captain (CPT) Allen Filson* recalled, "We estimate [we made] four

An artist's rendition of the AH-6 VALIANT 42 being struck by a rocket. (Illustration by Frank E. Allen)



VALIANT 42 made at least four revolutions during its autorotation before it crashed in to the desert. (Illustration by D. Telles)

revolutions before we came to a stop, facing the direction we had just flown from. The right skid was torn off, the main rotor blades had imploded the Plexiglas canopy and we were resting on the right-side weapons system."⁴ Gilson and his co-pilot Chief Warrant Officer 5 (CW5) Terry Pruitt* scrambled out of the wrecked helicopter. Both men were unhurt. The MH-60's and MH-6's quickly landed near the crashed Little Bird.

MAJ Teriault rapidly established a security perimeter around the crash site with the twenty-two ARSOF personnel from the other aircraft. The remaining AH-6, VALIANT 41, performed an airborne sweep of the area before landing near the crash site. Prudence dictated the Little Bird not remain aloft for long. "The reason we don't stay airborne is these helicopters are what we call 'Muj Magnets.' If you start circling some place, the bad guys think something is up and they mass and come at you," said CW5 David Cooper, the pilot of VALIANT 41.⁵ It was clear that the damaged helicopter would have to be evacuated back to Balad. This ended the mission to hit Objective DOMINION PINE.

MAJ Teriault directed that GALAHAD 65 and 66 return to Balad and bring back the Downed Aircraft Recovery Team (DART) to evacuate the aircraft. He kept eighteen of the ARSOF personnel for security at the site, releasing CPT Filson and CWO Pruitt and the remaining four operators to return with the Black Hawks. At 12:32, the two MH-60s departed leaving the two MH-6's and one AH-6 at the site. The estimated turn-around time was roughly thirty minutes. The Night Stalkers remained at the crash site to await the arrival of the recovery team.

Within the 160th SOAR, the Downed Aircraft Recovery Team is the key element when an aircraft must be recovered. Composed of highly trained aviation

maintenance personnel, the DART functions in the same manner that a Quick Reaction Force (QRF) would for a ground combat operation, waiting in readiness to respond to a downed aircraft. Capable of performing extensive on-site repairs, the DART could, if required, sling-load the downed bird back to the base of operations. The teams often use innovative techniques under adverse conditions to accomplish their mission.

"We knew it would be a 30-minute turn-around time to get the DART there and we could shorten the time the DART spent on the ground by prepping the aircraft for sling loading operations," said CWO Brad Furman* the pilot of GALAHAD 71.⁶ Furman and CWO Don Clemmons* boarded the side pods of the MH-6 GALAHAD 71 and flew off to comb the area for pieces of the downed helicopter. After a quick search, the pilots returned and began preparing the AH-6 for the sling load. With only a multi-purpose wrench and parts of the aircraft for tools, the pilots secured the loose pieces



The crashed AH-6 in the desert. The pilots used fuel and ammunition from the aircraft to keep VALIANT 41 in the fight.

prior to the extraction.⁷ While they worked, the security situation suddenly deteriorated.

With the ARSOF team was a Combat Controller Technician (CCT), U.S. Air Force Master Sergeant (MSgt) Avery Alsup*. In the area of the operation was an Air Force Intelligence Surveillance Reconnaissance (ISR) aircraft (call sign DRAGON*93) and two U.S. Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcons (HELLCAT 55 and 56) to provide close air support. "DRAGON 93 was pushed over the VALIANT 42 crash site and I passed the HELLCATs the location. I wanted to make sure they had good situational awareness in case something developed," said MSgt Alsup.⁸ As events unfolded, this proved to be a wise decision.

At 12:50 pm, ARSOF personnel manning the eastern part of the perimeter reported vehicles mounting weapons approaching from the south. "We initially believed them to be Iraqi Police or Iraqi Army based on the overt nature of their driving up on our position," said MAJ Teriault.⁹ This misconception soon vanished when RPG and small arms fire began to rain in on the ARSOF position as the trucks drove to within 800 meters of the perimeter. MSgt Alsup called in HELLCAT 56 (HELLCAT 55 had left for aerial refueling), to engage the advancing enemy and



U.S. Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcons prepare for operations at Balad Airbase, Iraq. The F-16s were instrumental in disrupting the enemy attack.

CW5 David Cooper and his co-pilot CWO Cory Carnival* scrambled into their AH-6, VALIANT 41, to join the fight. At the crash site, the four MH-6 pilots hastened to remove ammunition and fuel from the downed AH-6.

VALIANT 41 began engaging the enemy in the vicinity of a farmhouse on the south side of the landing area. "It was quite obvious where the fire was coming from," said Cooper. "I couldn't venture too far out in front of the ground guys because if I got shot down, I'm going to be all by myself. And during the daytime, a single helicopter fighting against air defense artillery weapons is not a good plan."¹⁰ HELLCAT 56 tried to engage the farmhouse, but was unable to identify the sand-colored building that blended into the desert. VALIANT 41 tried to mark the target by firing two smoke rockets at the building. The Little Bird attracted intense fire. Cooper explained the difficulties of marking the target. "We don't practice shooting from that far away because you can't hit them [the targets] with rockets or mini-guns. I'll be honest with you, it was not working."¹¹ VALIANT 41 quickly ran low on ammunition and fuel.

The situation on the ground continued to deteriorate as the enemy pressed home their assault. Overhead, DRAGON 93 reported six "Bongos," KIA Motors pick-up trucks with as many as twenty enemy fighters on board engaging the ARSOF troops from the area near the farmhouse. Three of the "Bongos" mounted 12.7mm machine guns. MSgt Alsup continued to work with HELLCAT 56 and at 1:15, the F-16 released a 500-pound bomb near the farmhouse that immediately suppressed the enemy fire.¹²

At the crash site under fire, the MH-6 pilots worked feverishly to get ammunition and fuel to resupply VALIANT 41. CWO Furman said, "We could see he was shooting a lot of his ordnance. It became apparent that he was going to need some more and need it quick."¹³

MH-6 pilots transferred ammunition and fuel from the downed VALIANT 42 to rearm and refuel VALIANT 41 during the attack.





The pilots removed ammunition and a 300-pound fuel bladder from the downed AH-6. They decanted the fuel into "Z" bags, (small fuel bladders) to refuel VALIANT 41. "It was heroic stuff," said CW5 Cooper, "They knew I was going to need bullets. They were doing all this stuff under fire and you can't do it in the prone. You have to be standing up. Without prompting, these guys got to

work."¹⁴ VALIANT 41 made two return trips to the crash site to refuel and rearm, rejoining the fight after each stop. The tide was turning in favor of the ARSOF.

At roughly 1:20, after more than forty minutes of heavy fighting, twelve of the "Bongos" broke contact and moved away to the south. HELLCAT 55 was back on station from its aerial refueling and began strafing runs



The Predator Unmanned Aerial Vehicle provided surveillance and firepower, destroying one enemy vehicle with a Hellfire missile.

on the vehicles with its 20mm cannon. Unfortunately, on the second run, the F-16 crashed into the desert about six miles from the landing zone. The pilot did not eject. His aggressive pursuit prevented any reorganization by the fleeing enemy and completely disrupted their attempts to continue the attack.

By 1:30, MAJ Teriault determined that there was no longer a viable threat, and fifteen minutes later, PALADIN 65 arrived with eleven additional ARSOF personnel, escorted by an AH-6 flown by CPT Filson and CWO Pruitt. Despite their crash, the two had gotten clearance from the Regiment's flight surgeon to return to assist in the recovery operation and provide escort for PALADIN 65.

DRAGON 93 continued to track the retreating enemy and as a *coup de grace*, at 3:30 pm, an unmanned Predator UAV (Unmanned Aerial Vehicle) killed one enemy vehicle with a Hellfire missile while the F-16 took out another. By 4:00 pm, the DART was on site and at 7:15, under the cover of darkness, the damaged Little Bird was sling loaded beneath the MH-60 and returned to Balad. The Americans suffered no casualties except for the courageous F-16 pilot, Major Dale Gilbert in HELLCAT 55.

For his heroic actions, CW5 David Cooper received the Distinguished Service Cross on 11 July 2008. Major Dale Gilbert, USAF, was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross with "V" device. Other members of the 160th received Silver Stars.

This action is significant for the size and aggressiveness of the enemy force and for the brave actions of the Night Stalkers in keeping VALIANT 41 in the air and fighting with the VALIANT 42 ammunition and fuel. As the ground force commander, MAJ Dillon Teriault said, "The enemy eventually turned and ran, whatever was left of them. He [VALIANT 41] killed four or five vehicles and probably 20 personnel. VALIANT 41 single-handedly repelled that attack."¹⁵ ▲

Kenneth Finlayson is the USASOC Deputy Command Historian. He earned his PhD from the University of Maine, and is a retired Army officer. Current research interests include Army special operations during the Korean War, special operations aviation, and World War II special operations units.



The MH-60K Black Hawks provide long-range night penetration for the 160th SOAR. The "Kilos" transported the ARSOF troops to Objective DOMINION PINE and later sling loaded the downed VALIANT 42.

Endnotes

- 1 Major Dillon Teriault*, interview by Lieutenant Colonel Jeffrey Slaker, USSOCOM History Office, 30 November 2006, Balad Air Base, Iraq, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 2 Teriault* interview.
- 3 Lieutenant Colonel Patrick O'Hara, U.S. Army Special Operations Command, interview by Dr. Kenneth Finlayson, 17 September 2007, Fort Bragg, NC, interview notes, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 4 Captain Allen Filson*, 160th SOAR, interview by Lieutenant Colonel Jeffrey Slaker, USSOCOM History Office, 30 November 2006, Balad Air Base, Iraq, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 5 Chief Warrant Officer 5 David Cooper, 160th SOAR, interview by Lieutenant Colonel Jeffrey Slaker, USSOCOM History Office, 30 November 2006, Balad Air Base, Iraq, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 6 Chief Warrant Officer Brad Furman*, 160th SOAR, interview by Lieutenant Colonel Jeffrey Slaker, USSOCOM History Office, 30 November 2006, Balad Air Base, Iraq, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 7 Furman* interview.
- 8 Master Sergeant Avery Alsup*, U.S. Air Force, interview by Lieutenant Colonel Jeffrey Slaker, USSOCOM History Office, 30 November 2006, Balad Air Base, Iraq, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 9 Teriault* interview.
- 10 Cooper interview.
- 11 Cooper interview.
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A Legacy of Support: **The 528th Sustainment Brigade**



by Robert W. Jones, Jr.

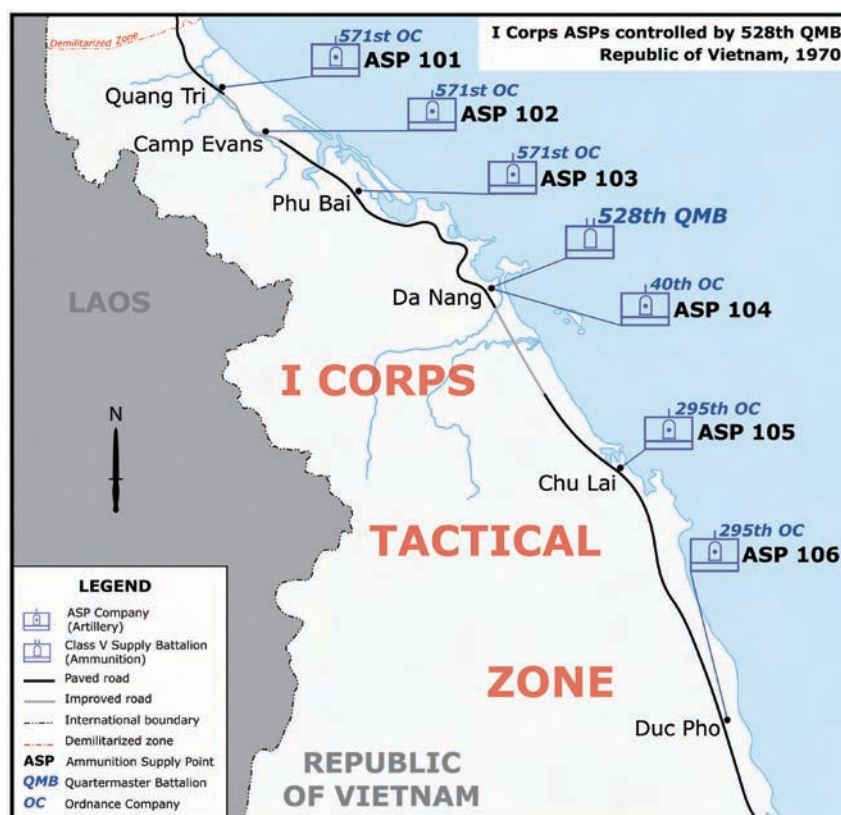
On 16 December 2008 Lieutenant General John F. Mulholland approved the redesignation of the Sustainment Brigade (Special Operations) (Airborne) (Provisional) as the 528th Sustainment Brigade (Airborne). While the designation is new, it is only the latest step in the unit's evolutionary history of providing support to Army Special Operations Forces. This article provides a short historical primer on the 528th Sustainment Brigade. A secondary purpose is to solicit historical campaign vignettes from former and current ARSOF support soldiers.¹ The lineage and honors of the 528th Sustainment Brigade (Airborne) stretches back to World War II.

The 528th Quartermaster Service Battalion was activated on 15 December 1942 at Camp McCain, Mississippi. Trained as a non-divisional service battalion, the 528th could use its four companies (each with 160 soldiers) as a manual labor force for a wide variety of missions: transportation and distribution of supplies (Classes I, II, III and IV; food, clothing and equipment, petroleum and general supplies), operation of supply depots, and supervision of civilian or prisoner of war labor. After its initial training, the unit supported the invasion and campaign in Sicily, as part of Lieutenant General (LTG) George S. Patton's Seventh Army. Transferred to the Fifth Army in Italy, the 528th provided combat service support to the Allied forces as they moved up the Italian "boot." The 528th Quartermaster Battalion's service on the Italian peninsula ended with the liberation of Rome.²

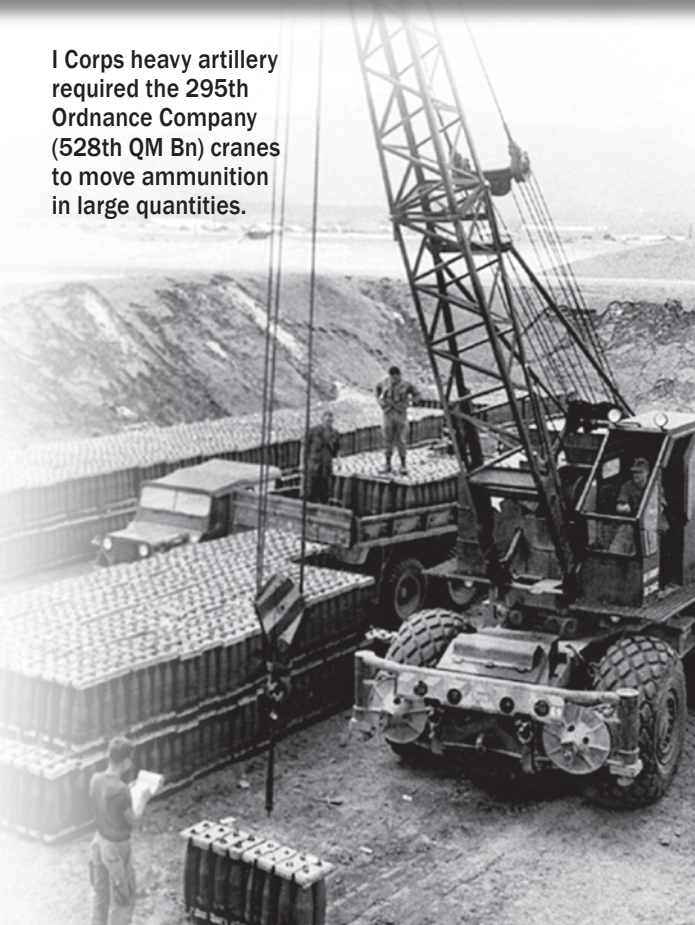
On 15 August 1944, seven Allied combat divisions conducted a combined amphibious and airborne invasion of Southern France (Operation DRAGOON). The 528th was among the myriad of support units involved in the invasion and subsequent move north. As a service unit the 528th Quartermaster Battalion unloaded supplies and supported units throughout the U.S. VI Corps area, and continued to support the VI Corps and other Seventh Army units for the remainder of the war. By the end of World War II, the 528th had earned six campaign streamers, to include two with arrowheads for assault landings in Sicily and Southern France. After the war the battalion served in the Army of Occupation in Germany until deactivated in 1947 in France. For the next twelve years the battalion was in an organizational limbo. It underwent several redesignations, inactivations, and activations, in both the active and reserve forces, as a quartermaster and transportation unit.³ The Vietnam War brought the unit back on the active rolls.

Beginning a new chapter in its history, the 528th Quartermaster Battalion was reactivated on 25 September 1969 at Phu Bai, in the Republic of South Vietnam. Organized as a Corps-level command and control headquarters for petroleum and transportation

Although not activated as an ammunition unit, the 528th Quartermaster Battalion ran six major Ammunition Supply Points (ASP) throughout the I Corps area. The ASPs supplied everything from small arms to 8-inch howitzer ammunition to American and Allied forces. (Map by Cherilyn A. Walley)



I Corps heavy artillery required the 295th Ordnance Company (528th QM Bn) cranes to move ammunition in large quantities.

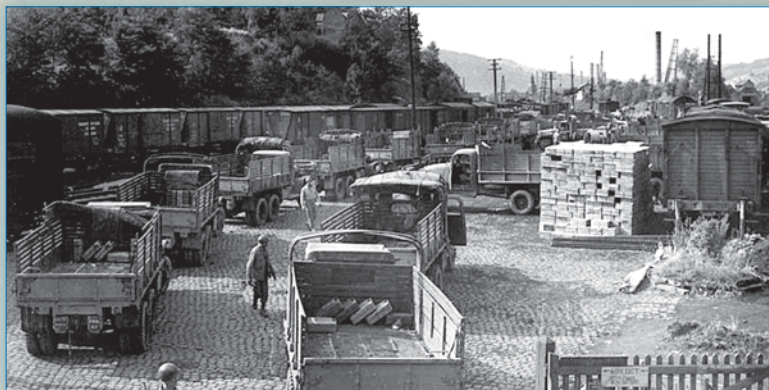


Quartermaster Units During WWII

During World War II the Army had the daunting task, of creating, training, arming, and deploying combat divisions. The Quartermaster General had to design logistics units to support the Army and the Army Air Corps. As the Army entered the war in 1941 support organizations were built to support the unwieldy World War I-style division. General George C. Marshall favored a "cellular force" that was flexible and could be changed to support units based on mission requirements.¹ The Quartermaster Corps developed Tables of Organization and Equipment for over forty different units, designed to provide support above the division-level. Under this organization, the QM battalion headquarters were designed to control between two and eight companies, task organized for mission support. Quartermaster units ran the gamut of services, a cross representation listed is below:²



- QM bakery company – produced fresh baked goods. ■
- QM railhead company – operated a supply railhead. ■
- QM refrigeration company, fixed – Class I supply (food).
- QM sales company, mobile – operated field post exchanges.
- QM remount troop – supplied replacement mules and horses to units.
- QM company, ammunition service group (aviation) – provided ammunition to aviation units.
- QM truck company – operated 40 to 50 2 ½-ton trucks.
- QM troop, pack – brought supplies forward with mules and horses. ■
- QM truck company, petroleum – brought Class III forward in tanker trucks.
- QM laundry company, semi mobile – A laundry unit that needed additional vehicles to move.
- QM salvage repair company; fixed – with shoe, clothing, and textile repair sections.
- QM salvage repair company, semi mobile – with shoe, clothing, and textile repair sections.
- QM service company – the manual labor unit of the Army. ■
- QM graves registration company – registration and burial of soldiers.
- QM fumigation and bath company – operated shower and delousing points.



Endnotes

- 1 Erna Risch and Chester L. Kieffer, *United States Army in World War II. The Quartermaster Corps: Organization, Supply, and Services, Volume II* (Washington DC: Center for Military History, 1983), 286.
- 2 War Department FM 101-10, *Organization, Technical and Logistical Data*, 1 August 45, 161-78; Risch and Kieffer, *The Quartermaster Corps: Organization, Supply, and Services, Volume II*, 279.

companies, the battalion was assigned to I Corps, the northernmost military operational area in South Vietnam. Although organized as a petroleum supply battalion the 528th instead assumed the ammunition supply mission for I Corps. In that capacity the 528th Quartermaster Battalion inherited three ordnance (ammunition) companies, a transportation detachment, and four explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) detachments.⁴

The withdrawal of the majority of U.S. combat troops in 1971 ended the requirement for the 528th Quartermaster Battalion in Vietnam. During its year and a half service in Vietnam, the 528th Quartermaster Battalion was awarded four additional campaign streamers. Without ceremony, on 15 April 1971, at Da Nang, Vietnam, the colors were cased and the unit once again inactivated. The 528th would remain inactivated until 1987, when Army Special Operations required dedicated support units.⁵

The 1st Special Operations Command (1st SOCOM) was provisionally established on 1 October 1982 at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, with the mission to exercise command and control of all Army active duty Special Operations Forces. The 1983 Mission Area Analysis of Combat Service Support requirements for 1st SOCOM eventually led to the creation of a Special Operations Communications Battalion and a Special Operations Support Battalion. But it was 1986 before the two units were activated to fill the gap between organic unit support to Corps and Theater-level support assets. As separate units, the commanders were rated by the 1st SOCOM Deputy Commanding General, but performed under the direction of the appropriate 1st SOCOM staff directorate. As a new unit the 528th was a one of a kind organization that had to be developed from scratch.⁶

Originally designated the 13th Support Battalion, the 1st SOCOM G-4, Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Louis G. Mason worked with a planning cell of several officers and NCOs to change the unit's designation to the 528th, based on the battalion's service in World War II and Vietnam. "The [13th] number [designation] was randomly picked by someone in Washington, but there was no historical significance. We worked to change the designation over eight to ten months to the 528th . . . I went to the Heraldic Department [Institute of Heraldry] in Washington DC. As a coincidence my father-in-law [Colonel James Cook] had commanded the Heraldic Department years before. I was able to meet with the director, Dr. Opel Landrum, who had once worked for my father-in-law, and we created the crest, motto, and coat of arms," remembered Mason.⁷ The battalion was on the inactive rolls for sixteen years before LTC Louis G. Mason took command of the new 528th Support Battalion at Fort Bragg on 17 May 1987.⁸ The soldiers of the battalion immediately began supporting exercises and operational missions.

Lieutenant Colonel Mason and his planning cell developed a table of organization and equipment (TO&E) for a unit dedicated to support ARSOF. Working with a ceiling of 163 personnel slots, the battalion was organized "as a Headquarters and Headquarters Company, with

a staff that included a medical capability, and three detachments; transportation, maintenance, and supply," recalled Mason.⁹ The 528th commander and staff would task organize teams or elements to support 1st SOCOM units. For example, if the 1st Ranger Battalion required additional support for an exercise, the 528th would develop a support team for that mission.¹⁰

For the next several years there were a myriad of internal organizational changes within 1st SOCOM to better support special operations. The three detachments became companies, organized as supply (A), maintenance (B), and transportation (C) as the 528th Support Battalion reorganized and grew in strength. New equipment increased capabilities for fuel handling and transportation. Most of the 528th Support Battalion deployed to Panama (Operation JUST CAUSE) in December 1989, supporting 7th Special Forces Group, the 75th Ranger Regiment, the 160th Special Operations Aviation Group, and Joint Special Operations units. The summer of 1990 the entire unit supported ARSOF during Operations DESERT SHIELD (the defense of Saudi Arabia) and DESERT STORM (the liberation of Kuwait). In less than three years (1989 – 1991) the 528th earned three campaign streamers for these operations. However, the organization was inefficient and left gaps in the support structure.¹¹

With the establishment of U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) as a major army command (MACOM) on 1 December 1989, the 528th Support and the 112th Signal Battalions continued to provide support for the entire command. However, taskings grew as two Reserve and two National Guard Special Forces Groups were added to the command. Lieutenant General (LTG) Wayne A. Downing, the USASOC Commanding General 1991-1993, seriously considered creating a headquarters to coordinate the two support units. The next USASOC Commander, LTG James T. Scott, summarized the problem: "One of the organizational deficiencies discovered when we reviewed who we and what we were...was that we did not have an entity to coordinate support for our deployed special operations forces. We had two great battalions equally good at providing all aspects of signal and combat service support to our units, but had no overarching headquarters to plan, coordinate



and determine what our priorities might be for that support.”¹² The need to improve the support drove a command and control capability for ARSOF.

LTG Scott directed the provisional formation of the Special Operations Support Command (SOSCOM). Established as a coordinating headquarters on 29 June 1995, SOSCOM’s mission was to provide combat service and signal support of ARSOF units throughout the world. This arrangement was refined during exercises and operational deployments. However, the coordinating headquarters had limitations.¹³

Organized as a Table of Distribution and Allowances (TDA) unit, the SOSCOM headquarters was not designed as a deployable unit. The 528th and 112th supported the 5th SFG (Task Force Dagger) and other SOF units in Afghanistan during Operation ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF). The 528th grew to 400 soldiers and reorganized as a Headquarters and Main Support Company (HMSC) and two Forward Support Companies (FSC). Each FSC, with augmentation, had the capability to build and support a Special Forces Forward Operating Base (FOB) with fuel, food, and supplies.¹⁴ The 528th Support Battalion task organized Alpha FSC, with augmentation from HMSC to support TF Dagger.

The company had a daunting task; establish Task Force Dagger’s intermediate staging base at Karshi Kanabad, Uzbekistan (soon called “K2” by the soldiers). The dilapidated ex-Soviet air base became a beehive of activity as support, Special Forces, aviators, and Air Force pitched in to create the base.¹⁵ The unit established initial supply, food service, ammunition, water, and fuel points and contracted for additional supplies from local sources. The K2 base expanded beyond Alpha FSC capabilities and was taken over by the 507th Corps Support Command. Alpha FSC deployed to Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan to support the ARSOF.¹⁶ The SOSCOM headquarters provided augmentees to the TF Dagger staff, but it did not deploy. This changed in 2003.

During Operation IRAQI FREEDOM (OIF), Colonel (COL) Kevin A. Leonard, the SOSCOM commander, was tasked as the command and control headquarters for Logistics Task Force-West, which supported Special

Operations Forces (SOF) in western Iraq. The majority of the SOSCOM headquarters deployed to meet this requirement. “At the height of combat operations, when the heavy [conventional military] units were moving up the Euphrates River Valley toward Baghdad, we were in seven different countries supporting ARSOF,” said COL Leonard.¹⁷ For a second time, Alpha FSC supported 5th SFG (TF Dagger) in Kuwait and western and southern Iraq. In the northern Iraq campaign, Bravo FSC supported 10th SFG (TF Viking).¹⁸ Throughout OEF and OIF the 528th supported other special operations forces that included U.S. Navy and Allied units. “Transformation” and “Modularity” became the “buzzwords” guiding the reorganization of the Army following its initial combat experiences in Afghanistan and Iraq.

As the Army reorganized, LTG Philip R. Kensinger, Jr., the USASOC Commanding General, approved the ARSOF Logistics Transformation Plan on 11 April 2005. This called for the creation of a Special Operations Sustainment Brigade, five regionally aligned Special Forces Group support battalions, and three Ranger Battalion support companies. Instead of just being a force provider for ARSOF logistics, the sustainment brigade became a coordinating headquarters. The SOSCOM headquarters and the 528th Special Operations Support

In western Iraq logistics soldiers unload humanitarian rations and water for a village near a forward operations base.



As the ISB at K2, Uzbekistan grew, the 528th had to find covered storage space for supplies.





528th Sustainment Brigade SSI

The new shoulder sleeve insignia (SSI) for the 528th Sustainment Brigade was approved on 25 March 2009 by the Department of the Army. The SSI's red and dark green background evokes the Brigade's support to Special Operations units. The lightning bolts denote combat support, combat service support, and signal elements of the brigade and the speed at which these missions are performed. Gold embodies the quality and value of the unit's soldiers. The parachute symbolizes the Brigade's airborne capabilities. The black dagger represents combat readiness and the unit's association with the United States Army Special Operations Command.

528th Sustainment Brigade DUI

The 528th Sustainment Brigade adopted the distinctive unit insignia (DUI) of the 528th Support Battalion, which was originally approved on 14 January 1988.

The gold heraldic shield is emblazoned with a green "Vert" symbolizing mountains and a blue and white wave fountain that represents water. The blue fleur-de-lis is emblematic of the unit's wartime service in France during World War II. The unit's two assault landings (Sicily and Southern France) are indicated by the red arrowheads. The green symbolizes the unit mission to support Special Operations.

Attached above and below the shield are Red scrolls doubled and inscribed in Gold with the unit's motto "WE SUPPORT" at the top and "TO THE UPMOST" in base.



A soldier replaces her USASOC SSI with the new 528th SSI. On her beret flash is the 528th DUI designed by COL Louis G. Mason

528th Campaigns and Decorations

World War II

Sicily (Arrowhead)
Rome-Arno
Southern France (Arrowhead)
Rhineland
Ardennes-Alsace
Central Europe

Vietnam

Summer-Fall 1969
Winter-Spring 1970
Sanctuary Counteroffensive
Counteroffensive, Phase VII

Southwest Asia

Defense of Saudi Arabia
Liberation and Defense of Kuwait

War on Terrorism

Afghanistan
Iraq

Unit Decorations

Valorous Unit Award
Iraq-Kuwait 1991
Meritorious Unit Commendation
Central Asia 2001-2004



COL Duane A. Gamble places the new 528th Sustainment Brigade SSI on the uniform of CSM Charles M. Tobin, during a ceremony on 30 June 2009.

Battalion were designated as the “bill payers” for the creation of the new logistics units in USASOC.¹⁹

On 2 December 2005, the ARSOF logistics transformation began at Fort Bragg when the SOSCOM and the 528th Special Operations Support Battalion were officially deactivated. At the same ceremony the Sustainment Brigade (Special Operations) (Airborne) (Provisional) and the Special Troops Battalion (Airborne) (Provisional), were activated as part of the ARSOF logistics transformation plan.²⁰ The new Sustainment Brigade (SB) became a deployable headquarters instead of a garrison organization. The commander, COL Edward F. Dorman III, noted the changes to the unit: “Unlike other sustainment brigades in the Army, The Sentinels [the nickname for the SOSCOM and the new Sustainment Brigade] have a global mission; [we] synchronize the sustainment of the SOF Warriors of U.S. Army Special Forces Command, the 75th Ranger Regiment and other joint SOF elements throughout the world as they prosecute the war on terror.”²¹ The provisional Sustainment Brigade was composed of the Brigade Headquarters, the 112th Special Operations Signal Battalion, six ARSOF Liaison Elements (ALE), and the new Special Troops Battalion (which includes the Army National Guard 195th Forward Support Company and the 197th Special Troops Company). The ALEs coordinated ARSOF logistics requirements and plans for deployed forces in a Geographic Combatant Command region. The new brigade also provided ARSOF with a unique medical capability; two Role II units called “SORT” (Special Operations Resuscitation Team).²² The provisional Sustainment Brigade would provide combat service support and combat health support planning and execution coordination for USASOC units for three years until it was redesignated the 528th Sustainment Brigade (Airborne).

The new 528th Sustainment Brigade continues the history, lineage, and heritage of the 528th Support Battalion. As a separate brigade-sized unit, it merited its own shoulder sleeve insignia (SSI, or “shoulder patch”). COL Duane A. Gamble and his staff designed their SSI, which was approved in March 2009, by the Institute of Heraldry. During the official activation ceremony, on 30 June 2009, the Special Troops Battalion soldiers received the new patches. The formal 528th Sustainment Brigade activation ceremony took place on 17 July 2009, in conjunction with the change of command of COL Duane A. Gamble to COL Lenny J. Kness.²³

The newly designated 528th Sustainment Brigade (Airborne) continues a legacy of service to Army special operations. This short historical primer on the evolution of the 528th Sustainment Brigade is not intended to be a definitive, all-inclusive history of the unit. The contributions of ARSOF support soldiers are taken for granted; getting “chow” on time is considered normal, but not getting it is long remembered by combat soldiers.²⁴ With its roots dating to World War II, the 528th Sustainment Brigade (A) has a long legacy of Army SOF support. ♣

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Endnotes

- 1 Headquarters, 528th Sustainment Brigade (Airborne), Operations Order 09-01, 22 January 2009, Fort Bragg, NC, copy in the USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, USASOC Permanent Orders: 353-1 directs the discontinuation of the Sustainment Brigade (SO) (A) (Provisional) effective 15 December 2008; USASOC Permanent Orders: 353-2 directs the activation of the 528th Sustainment Brigade (Airborne) effective 16 December 2008.
- 2 Erna Risch and Chester L. Kieffer, *United States Army in World War II. The Quartermaster Corps: Organization, Supply, and Services, Volume II* (Washington DC: Center for Military History, 1983), 286; War Department General Order 70, 20 August 1945 for the Sicilian landings, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; William F. Ross and Charles F. Romanus, *The Quartermaster Corps: Operations in the War against Germany* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 1965), 78.
- 3 War Department General Order 70, 20 August 1945 for the Sicilian landings, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; Ross and Romanus, *The Quartermaster Corps: Operations in the War against Germany*, 78 and 120; War Department General Order 70, 20 August 1945, USASOC History Office Classified Files; Department of the Army, U.S. Army Center for Military History, Statement of Service for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 528th Sustainment Brigade, dated 9 April 2009, copy in the USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; **The battalion earned a campaign streamer and assault arrowhead for its participation in the invasion and another three campaign streamers—Rhine land (15 September 1944–21 March 1945), Ardennes-Alsace (16 December 1944–25 January 1945), and Central Europe (22 March 1945–11 May 1945).**

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- 5 General Orders 8, 10 January 1971, Department of the Army, Headquarters, U.S. Army Support Command, Da Nang, copy in USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; **The campaigns were Summer-Fall 1969, Winter-Spring 1970, Sanctuary Counteroffensive, and Counteroffensive, Phase VII.**
- 6 Retired Colonel Louis G. Mason, interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe and Major James W. Bogart, 23 February 2006, digital recording, Fort Bragg, NC, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; **The two new support units would be designated the 112th Signal Battalion and the 528th Support Battalion.**
- 7 Retired Colonel Louis G. Mason, interview by Lieutenant Colonel Robert W. Jones, Jr., 19 August 2009, interview notes, Fort Bragg, NC, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 8 Mason interview, 23 February 2006; Mason interview, 19 August 2009; **The 13th Quartermaster Battalion spent the majority of World War II as a laundry unit at Camp Claiborne, Louisiana;** Richard W. Stewart, Stanley L. Sandler, and Joseph R. Fischer, *Command History of the United States Army Special Operations Command: 1987-1992, Standing Up The MACOM* (Fort Bragg, NC: USASOC Directorate of History and Museums, 1996), 10; Department of the Army, USASOC, "Army Special Operations Forces Combat Service Support Review, 31 January 1991," Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 9 Mason interview, 23 February 2006; Mason interview, 19 August 2009.
- 10 Mason interview, 23 February 2006; Mason interview, 19 August 2009.
- 11 **Between 1989 and 1991 the 528th was awarded three additional campaign streamers for Panama (Operation JUST CAUSE) and Operations DESERT SHIELD for the defense of Saudi Arabia and DESERT STORM for the liberation of Kuwait; Unit level support was handled by the Special Forces Group Support Companies (GSC) or the small support platoons in the Ranger Battalions, but they had limited capabilities.**
- 12 Stewart, Sandler, and Fischer, *Standing Up The MACOM*, 2, 10, and 17; **The Army Reserve SFGs were the 11th and 12th and the Army National Guard SFGs were the 19th and 20th; The 1st Special Operations Command (1st SOCOM) was the predecessor of U.S. Army Special Forces Command;** Scott R. Gourley, "U.S. Army Special Operations," *Army*, March 1996, Volume 46, 23-24; Department of the Army, US Army Special Operations Command, "United States Army Special Operations Command Reorganization Briefing, 15 February 1995," Fort Bragg, NC, copy in the USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; Department of the Army, USASOC, "Army Special Operations Forces Combat Service Support Review, 31 January 1991," Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics, Fort Bragg, NC, 1.
- 13 Brian J. Burns, "The Army Special Operations Support Command," *Army Logistician*, May-June 2001, www.almc.army.mil/alogs/Issues/MayJun01/MS657.html; Retired Lieutenant Colonel Eugene G. Piasecki, interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe and Major James W. Bogart, 23 February 2006, digital recording, Fort Bragg, NC, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 14 Department of the Army, US Army Special Operations Command, "Special Operations Support Command (SOSCOM) Command Briefing," 6 March 2002, Fort Bragg, NC, copy in the USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; Major Mark A. Ferris, "Supporting Special Operations Forces," *Army Logistician*, September-October 1998, <http://www.almc.army.mil/alogs/Issues/SepOct98/MS292.htm>, accessed 7 June 2009, copy in the USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; **With 133 soldiers the multifunctional Forward Support Company (FSC) was almost as large as the original TO&E of the 528th. Each FSC provided combat service support: class I (subsistence), III (petroleum), V (ammunition), water production, Role II medical, and engineer support (base camp construction) to ARSOF units. The FSC could also establish and operate an intermediate staging base (ISB) for SOF. The unit was equipped with MK19 machineguns, .50-caliber machineguns, and M249 squad automatic weapons for force protection and base defense.**
- 15 Jennifer J. Eidson, "Soldiers Work to Make Conditions Bearable during Operation Enduring Freedom," *Sine Pari Magazine*, <http://www.soc.mil/News/SinePari/528th.shtml>, accessed 7 June 2009, copy in the USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; Charles H. Briscoe, et al, *Weapon of Choice: Army Special Operations Forces in Afghanistan* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2003), 72-73.
- 16 Brigadier General Kevin Leonard, interview by Major James W. Bogart, 23 February 2006, digital recording, Fort Bragg, NC, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; Briscoe, *Weapon of Choice*, 373-374 and 389.
- 17 Brigadier General Kevin Leonard, interview by Major James W. Bogart, 23 February 2006, recording, Fort Bragg, NC, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; Charles H. Briscoe, et al, *All Roads Lead to Baghdad: Army Special Operations Forces in Iraq* (Fort Bragg, NC: Department of Defense, U.S. Army Special Operations Command History Office, 2006), 100-101.
- 18 Briscoe, *All Roads Lead to Baghdad*, 90-93; A. Dwayne Aaron and Cherilyn A. Walley, "North by Northwest: Combat Service Support in Northern Iraq," *Veritas: the Journal of Army Special Operations History*, Volume 1, Number 1, Winter 2005, 26-31.
- 19 Colonel Edward F. Dorman III, interview by Lieutenant Colonel Robert W. Jones, Jr., 8 November 2005, digital recording, Fort Bragg, NC, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; Ronald R. Ragin, "Transforming Special Operations Logistics," *Army Logistician*, November-December 2005, www.almc.army.mil/alogs/Issues/NovDec05/specop_log.html; **The Group Support Battalions are organic to the respective Special Forces Groups and the Ranger Support Companies are under the command of the respective battalions. Additionally a Ranger Support Operations Detachment (RSOD) was created to support the 75th Ranger Regiment headquarters.**
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- 21 Bonita Riddley, "ARSOF Sustainment Brigade Changes Commander," USASOC News Service, 20 July 2007, <http://news.soc.mil/releases/News%20Archive/2007/July/070720-02.html>.
- 22 **The Special Troops Battalion consists of the Brigade Headquarters and Headquarters Company and two National Guard companies. With an assigned strength of 141 soldiers, the 195th Forward Support Company (Nebraska Army National Guard) has medical, food service, supply, maintenance, transportation, and engineer platoons. The 197th Special Troops Company (Utah Army National Guard) includes airdrop, medical, food service, supply, maintenance, transportation, mortuary affairs, and engineer capabilities. The medical section includes a Role II capability. The 197th also includes a 58-man staff augmentation platoon for the brigade headquarters; For more information see Kenneth Finlayson, "SORT(ing) Out the Casualties: The Special Operations Resuscitation Team in Afghanistan," *Veritas: the Journal of Army Special Operations History*, Volume 5, Number 1, 2009; Headquarters, 528th Sustainment Brigade (Airborne), "June 2009 Newcomer's Briefing," 24 June 2009, copy in the USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; Ragin, "Transforming Special Operations Logistics;" U.S. Army Special Operations Command, "Sustainment Brigade (Special Operations) (Airborne)," U.S. Army Special Operations Command Public Affairs Office [http://news.soc.mil/factsheets/SOSCOM_fact%20\(F\).pdf](http://news.soc.mil/factsheets/SOSCOM_fact%20(F).pdf).**
- 23 Headquarters, 528th Sustainment Brigade (Airborne), Operations Order 09-01, 22 January 2009, Fort Bragg, NC, copy in the USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; **The 528th Special Operations Support Battalion was inactivated on 17 October 2005. The headquarters was provisionally redesignated as Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 528th Sustainment Brigade on 18 October 2007. Shortly thereafter, the 528th Sustainment Brigade (Airborne) was officially activated on 16 December 2008 at Fort Bragg, NC, but the official ceremony did not take place until 17 July 2009.**
- 24 Headquarters, 528th Sustainment Brigade (Airborne), Operations Order 09-01, 22 January 2009, Fort Bragg, NC, copy in the USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, USASOC Permanent Orders: 353-1 directs the discontinuation of the Sustainment Brigade (SO) (A) (Provisional) effective 15 December 2008; USASOC Permanent Orders: 353-2 directs the activation of the 528th Sustainment Brigade (Airborne) effective 16 December 2008.





From the Yak & Yeti to Port-au-Prince

ODA 155 Trains the Gurkhas

by Kenneth Finlayson





The small country of Nepal lies between India and China, and is one of the poorest nations in the world. The economy of this nation of 29 million is largely dependent on agriculture and tourism.

1st Special Forces
Group Flash

Two huge aircraft squatted on the runway as the soldiers began to file onboard. Around the perimeter of the airfield, anxious family members strained to catch a glimpse of their loved ones bound for a foreign land. As the last of the troops climbed into the airplanes, two groups of priests in full religious attire brought two goats to the front of each aircraft. Chanting prayers, waving flags, and swinging incense burners, they began blessing the aircraft. In the midst of the ceremony, the wicked *kukri* knives flashed and the goats were sacrificed. The priests then liberally anointed the soldiers inside and the noses of the airplanes with the goat's blood, to the delight of the crowd and consternation of the Air Force crews. Once properly blessed, the two aircraft lumbered up the taxiway, turned at the far end, and accelerated down the tarmac. As they roared down the runway, the crowds of people watching from the berms along the runway were blown backwards. The aircraft lifted off and the Gurkhas of the Nepalese Army were on their way to Haiti.

In 1995 the Nepalese Army contributed a 410-man battalion of Gurkha troops to the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH). They were trained and advised by Operational Detachment-Alpha 155 (ODA 155), 2nd Battalion, 1st Special Forces Group, Fort Lewis, Washington. This article will explain this unique mission, from its inception in November 1994 until ODA 155 returned from Haiti in April 1995. The story is one of coups, attempted coups, and strange foreign cultures with a touch of voodoo mixed in. All were part of the politically charged atmosphere of the shattered island of Haiti.

United Nations peacekeeping was not foreign to the Nepalese Army in 1995. They had supported thirteen UN operations since 1958.¹ Nepalese troops had worked in Lebanon, the Sinai, Somalia, Tajikistan, and Iraq. What was different this time was the presence of United States Army Special Forces (SF) soldiers as trainers and advisors to the Nepalese contingent. ODA 155 trained them in



Nepalese in traditional Hindu religious attire. The blessing of the soldiers and the U.S. Air Force aircraft was done to ensure safe passage. To the dismay of the crew, the blood of sacrificed goats was used in the ceremony.

Nepal and then accompanied the Gurkhas to Haiti and advised them for four months.

The mission began with the Pre-deployment Site Survey (PDSS) in November 1994, the normal reconnaissance and coordination visit to establish rapport before the commencement of a mission. Captain (CPT) Maxey B. Carpenter, Commander, ODA 155 and six non-commissioned officers (NCOs) made up the PDSS. Enroute to Kathmandu, the capital city of Nepal, they stopped briefly in Dhaka, Bangladesh, to coordinate with the U.S. Defense Attaché and the Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) which had responsibility for Nepal. Their coordination completed, the team flew to Kathmandu.

The SF team was billeted in the famous Yak & Yeti Hotel, the renowned gathering place for Western mountaineering expeditions preparing to assault Mount Everest and the other giant Himalayan peaks. They began their initial coordination at the Nepalese Army



A taxi in Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh. The first stop for the Special Forces team was Dhaka, to coordinate with the U.S. Military Assistance and Advisory Group that had responsibility for Nepal.



The bustling capital city provided a wealth of strange sights and sounds for the Special Forces soldiers.



A view of the famous Yak and Yeti hotel. The Nepalese economy is heavily dependent on dollars generated by tourism, particularly mountaineering and trekking.

headquarters in Kathmandu. It was here that they got their first exposure to the famous Gurkha troops who have played a prominent role in Nepalese history.

Nepal's history began as one of numerous small separate kingdoms dating back to 500 AD. In the 1700's Prithvi Narayan Shah of the Kingdom of Gorkha and his fierce warriors conquered the Kathmandu Valley. He moved on to conquer and unify the country.² The descendents of Prithvi Shah's Army, today's Gurkhas, have an outstanding reputation as soldiers, especially

during their long history of service with the British Army dating to 1841.³

"There are basically three levels of Gurkha troops, depending on whom they fight for," said CPT Carpenter. "The top tier goes to the British Army's Brigade of Gurkhas. The second goes to the Indian Army, and the third serve at home in the Nepalese Army. While you could say they were the 'third string', they were good soldiers."⁴ The SF team was just getting their PDSS going when it was abruptly cut short in the first week.

Political unrest had plagued Nepal since 1990 when a parliamentary form of government replaced the absolute monarchy of the Nepalese King. A growing Maoist insurgency and a strong Communist Party representation in the Parliament threatened stability after the November 1994 elections. King Birendra dissolved the parliament and moved to restore the power of the monarchy. This reverse coup had the capital in chaos. *(Continued on page 34)*

The Nepalese capital city of Kathmandu sprawls across the valley of the same name. Conquered by the King of Gorkha in the 1700's, it remains the center of Nepalese cultural, economic, and government activity.



Operation UPHOLD DEMOCRACY



The USS *Harlan County* was prevented from docking at Port-au-Prince by armed mobs instigated by General Raoul Cedras. This action ultimately resulted in the deployment of U.S. and UN forces to Haiti to restore the Aristide government.

The overthrow of Haiti's elected President Jean Bertrand Aristide on 30 September 1991 by Lieutenant General Raoul Cedras' military coup set off a chain of events that culminated in Operation UPHOLD DEMOCRACY. The United Nation's response to the coup was to pass UN Resolution 970 placing a trade embargo on Haiti. The embargo devastated the economy and triggered an exodus of more than 21,000 citizens. Many tried to enter the United States. On 3 July 1993, the UN and the Organization of American States (OAS) brokered the Governors Island Accords, a ten-point program designed to restore democracy to Haiti.¹ Both Cedras and Aristide signed the Accords, prompting the UN to lift the embargo. However, the reconciliation was short-lived.

When 220 U.S. and UN advisors arrived in Port-au-Prince aboard the USS *Harlan County* to begin the mission of training and advising the Haitian Army and police forces on 8 October 1993, an armed mob refused to allow the vessel to dock. The conditions in Haiti continued to deteriorate and resulted in a humanitarian crisis. On 31 July 1994 the UN Security Council passed Resolution 940 authorizing "application of all necessary means by member nations" to restore the elected Aristide government.² President William J. Clinton committed the United States to lead the multi-national effort.

The XVIIIth Airborne Corps at Fort Bragg, North Carolina was given the task of planning and executing the campaign called Operation UPHOLD DEMOCRACY. The Corps first formed Joint Task Force 180 (JTF-180) giving the 82nd Airborne Division the mission of invading the island to enforce the UN mandate to restore the Aristide government. The Corps then established JTF-190 around the 10th Mountain Division as the follow-on force for the long-term occupation of the country. Included in JTF-190 was the 3rd Special

U.S. Coast Guard personnel interdicting a boat load of Haitians attempting to reach the United States. The flood of refugees was in large part responsible for the U.S. and UN reaction.



Forces Group (3rd SFG), whose mission was to establish a presence in the countryside and provide a secure environment for the return of the Aristide regime and the subsequent follow-on elections. On 19 September 1994, JTF-180 aboard the USS *Eisenhower* was poised off the coast of Haiti to conduct an airmobile assault into Port-au-Prince. Aircraft loaded with paratroopers of the 82nd were in the air bound for the island. A last-minute diplomatic effort by former President Jimmy Carter, Senator Sam Nunn, and General Colin Powell convinced LTG Cedras to honor the Governors Island Accords. JTF-180 entered the now permissive environment and established control of Port-au-Prince. President Aristide arrived on 15 October 1994. His return triggered the transition between JTF-180 and the UN forces. JTF-180 was replaced by JTF-190 and on 24 October 1994, the 10th Mountain Division and the UN-authorized Multi-National Force (MNF) took over



3rd Special Forces
Group Flash



10th Mountain Division
SSI

the mission. JTF-190 and the MNF formed an interim force that was replaced in April 1995 by the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH).

JTF-190 was composed of the 10th Mountain Division, the 3rd Special Forces Group (3rd SFG) and the MNF. 1,500 troops from the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Bangladesh, Guatemala, and Costa Rica joined with the 21,000 U.S. soldiers to restore order and provide security for the population that was riven with civil unrest.³ The 10th Mountain Division and the MNF concentrated their effort in the capital city of Port-au-Prince while the 3rd SFG dispersed its operational detachments throughout the country. 3rd SFG adopted a "Hub and Spoke" organization that concentrated the teams in certain towns (the Hub) from which they radiated out to the remote outlying villages (the Spokes), in an economy of force role that provided the widest possible coverage for the Group's resources. The mission of UPHOLD DEMOCRACY was to establish a secure environment for the return of the Aristide government and the subsequent follow-on national elections stipulated by the UN.

Operation UPHOLD DEMOCRACY formally ended on 31 March 1995 when the United States transferred the peacekeeping responsibility to the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH). By then the U.S. 25th Infantry Division which replaced the 10th Mountain Division in January 1995, was leading the U.S. forces.

The heavily armed infantrymen of the U.S. 10th Mountain Division landed at Toussaint L'Ouverture International Airport in Port-au-Prince to restore order in the country. Operating outside the capital, the 3rd Special Forces Group covered the remote villages. Haiti is a small country that shares Hispaniola island with the Dominican Republic.

President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. It was the overthrow of the democratically elected Aristide by General Raoul Cedras that triggered the UN embargo and Operation UPHOLD DEMOCRACY.



Thirty-four nations sent contingents to the UNMIH, which in June 1995 reached its peak strength of 6,000 troops and 900 civilian police.⁴ UNMIH continued to carry on the mission of providing a secure environment for the reestablishment of democratic government in Haiti until it was replaced in June 1996 by the United Nations Support Mission in Haiti (UNSMIH). The charter of the UNSMIH was to provide humanitarian assistance and take the lead in rebuilding the Haitian economy.

Endnotes

- 1 U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Combined Arms Research Library, "Governors Island Accords", appendix D, <http://www-cgsc.army.mil/carl/resources/csi/kretchik/appendixd.asp>.
- 2 United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1994, <http://www.un.org/docs/scres/1994/scres94.htm>.
- 3 Lieutenant Colonel David Bentley, "Operation UPHOLD DEMOCRACY: Military Support for Democracy in Haiti," in *The Strategic Forum*, Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University Number 78, June 1996, http://www.ndu.edu/inss/strforum/SF_78/forum78.html.
- 4 United Nations Mission in Haiti Fact Sheet, http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/co_mission/unhifacts.html.



The SF team was forced to leave the Yak & Yeti and move into the U.S. Embassy. After several days, they flew back to Fort Lewis. The mission was on hold.

Six weeks later, the situation in Nepal stabilized and the mission was back on for January 1995. On 13 January, CPT Carpenter and seven NCOs returned to the Kathmandu and the Yak & Yeti for a three-week training period before the Gurkhas deployed to Haiti. Sergeant First Class (SFC) Brian L. Jaenicke, the team sergeant, and the two remaining team members would meet them in Haiti.⁵ Staff Sergeant (SSG) Randy Derr, one of the two team medics recalled; "The hotel was supposed to be the best in town. Two of the team came down with dysentery that incapacitated them for three days. We usually ate in town, but we did eat in the hotel restaurant once. They had borscht, which I thought was interesting."⁶ Once on the ground, the team began training the Nepalese battalion at their barracks on the outskirts of Kathmandu. The three-week training period in Nepal was designed to prepare the Gurkhas for their mission in Haiti.

The UN peacekeeping mission in Haiti was to establish a safe and secure civil environment for the return of President Aristide. As such, the SF training concentrated on crowd control and security measures, the establishment of checkpoints, roadblock procedures, searches, and riot control. U.S. Kevlar helmets and riot control equipment,

face shields, batons, and shields were issued. U.S. troop leading procedures were taught as well as intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB) specific to Haiti.⁷ Medical training was also part of the preparation, as the Nepalese deployed with their own medical personnel.

"The two team medics, SSG Nate [Nathan] Evans and myself, concentrated on training with the medical personnel who would be deploying with us," said SSG Derr. "We primarily did trauma management training with about twelve medical personnel. Except for one doctor and one physician's assistant, they were medics. We trained at the local military hospital."⁸

The SF soldiers found that most of the Gurkha officers spoke English. "We dealt with the officers in training," recalled CPT Carpenter. "They would do most of the translation for the troops."⁹ The short preliminary training period completed, the battalion prepared to leave for Haiti. The flight proved to be memorable.

Transportation was provided by six C-141B Starlifters from the U.S. 12th Air Force, Scott Air Force Base, Illinois. Kathmandu's Tribhuvan International Airport could only accommodate two of the huge aircraft at one time so the deployment was conducted in three lifts of two airplanes spread over three consecutive days. One SF soldier accompanied the seventy Gurkhas on each aircraft. CPT Carpenter and SSG Derr escorted the first group.

Nepalese Army



The Chief of Staff of the Nepalese Army inspects a contingent of troops prior to their deployment for UN service in Bosnia. The Nepalese Army has been supporting UN operations since 1958.



A member of the Royal Guard Brigade on duty at one of the entrances to the palace complex. In 1995, the Nepalese Army numbered 46,000, with a brigade dedicated to guarding the Royal Family.

In 1995 the Nepalese Army was a force of 46,000 active soldiers. The primary units in the Army were seven infantry brigades, a Special Forces brigade, an artillery brigade and an engineer brigade. The separate Royal Guard Brigade, which included a Military Police battalion provided security for the Nepalese Royal family. In addition to the combat brigades there was a cavalry squadron with British Ferret armored cars, and forty-three independent infantry companies dispersed throughout the country. The Special Forces Brigade consisted of one airborne battalion and two independent Special Forces companies. A minuscule air wing of 215 personnel flew and maintained one

British Aerospace BAe-748 turbo-prop cargo aircraft, two 20-seat Short SC-7 Skyvans and a fleet of eight French Aérospatiale Puma, Super Puma and U.S. Bell helicopters. In addition to the Army, there was a paramilitary reserve of 40,000 men. The Nepalese National Police force numbered 40,000. In 1995-96, Nepal sent forces to Bosnia, Croatia, Lebanon, and Liberia as well as Haiti in support of UN operations.¹

Endnote

1 *The Military Balance, 1995-1996* (London: Adlard and Sons Ltd., 1996), 139.

"That plane ride was probably my favorite ever," said Derr. "All the planes and soldiers got blessed so there was blood everywhere. None of the Nepalese knew how to buckle their seat belts so when we got on, I buckled all seventy before we could go."¹⁰ The first leg of the journey was to Mumbai (formerly Bombay), India. When the two aircraft landed, they were immediately surrounded by Indian Army soldiers in gun jeeps. The Indians had not received notification that armed soldiers from another nation would be transiting the country. "We had a few tense moments before we got that sorted out," said Carpenter. Following the negotiations, the Indians allowed the planes to refuel and they left for their next intermediate stop, Rota, Spain.¹¹

"We did our first in-flight refuel on the way to Spain," said CPT Carpenter. "Prior to that, the troops had all eaten an MRE [Meals Ready-to-Eat], which is pretty rich food compared to their normal diet. By the time we finished the refuel, the MREs were all over the inside of the aircraft. This did not endear us to the crew chief."¹² At the U.S. Naval Station, Rota, Spain, "We got a warm welcome from the Air Force colonel from AMC [Air Mobility Command] who took us into the terminal," said Carpenter. This gave the troops a chance to clean the aircraft as well as themselves.

"This was the funniest part of the trip," said Randy Derr. "The Nepalese had never had access to running water and they were taking baths in the sinks to wash the blessing blood and MRE [vomit] off. Pretty soon there was about an inch of red standing water all over the latrine. It was probably the only time I ever saw my team leader get upset."¹³ After thoroughly cleaning up the flooded latrine, the troops boarded the C-141s for the final long leg to Haiti. "Needless to say, when we left that colonel was no longer our friend," said Carpenter.¹⁴ The



last leg was as bad as the previous two.

"We had two in-flight refuels to make before we got to Haiti. I offered Benadryl® to the officers to give to the troops

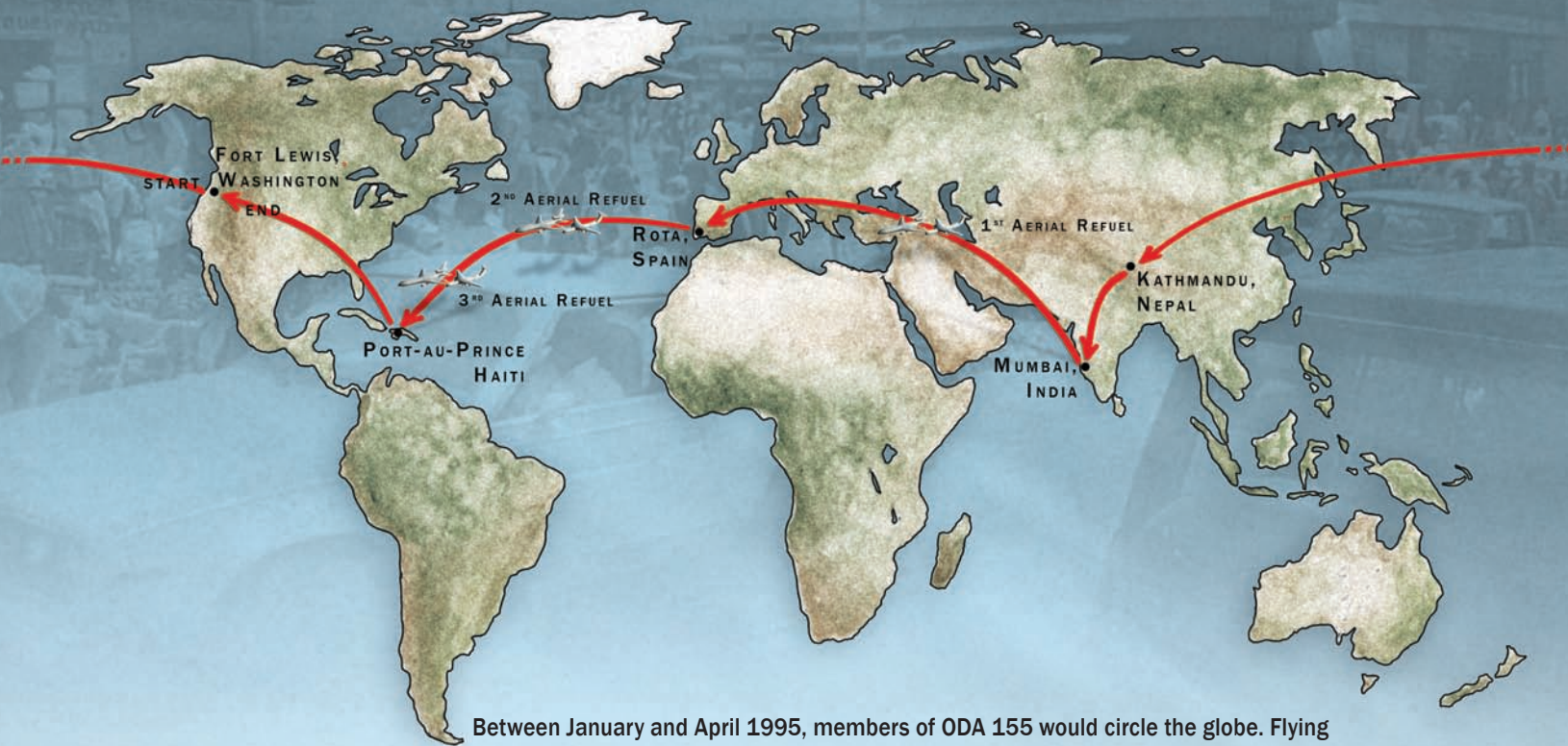
Buddhist and Hindu temples (shown) are numerous throughout the city of Kathmandu. The Hindu Gurhkass received a ceremonial blessing before their departure.



The Special Forces advance party was forced to leave their hotel for the U.S. Embassy during the aborted attempted coup in Kathmandu. After several days, the team flew back to the United States with their mission "on hold."

C-141B Starlifter. After being properly blessed in Kathmandu, U.S. Air Force C-141B's carried the Nepalese contingent halfway around the world to Haiti.





Between January and April 1995, members of ODA 155 would circle the globe. Flying westward from Fort Lewis, Washington to Nepal, the team stopped in India and Spain enroute to Haiti. In April, the team then flew back to Fort Lewis.

to ward off airsickness,” remembered Carpenter. “The officers said their tough Gurkhas didn’t need them. So we had a repeat of the first refuel. Everyone got sick. When it came time for the third refuel, they changed their minds.”¹⁵ By then the two Starlifters were nearing Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

“The officers gave each guy two or three pills. Now they only weigh about ninety pounds so pretty soon it looked like the ‘Night of the Living Dead,’ with bodies strewn all over,” chuckled Carpenter. “Most of them were still out when we landed.”¹⁶ Once on the ground, the best was yet to come.

“The officers gave each guy two or three pills. Now they only weigh about ninety pounds so pretty soon it looked like the ‘Night of the Living Dead,’ with bodies strewn all over,”
—CPT Maxey B. Carpenter

“As we touched down and headed for the terminal, I was up in the cockpit in UDT shorts, a T-shirt, and Oakleys®,” remembered Carpenter ruefully. “The pilot asked who was meeting us and I said just my team with some trucks. He said, ‘So who is that?’ I looked down to the end of the runway and I saw the 25th ID commander’s flag, the 25th Division Band, and all kinds of people milling around. I pleaded with the pilot to take a long slow taxi around the airfield and dove down into the cargo hold to change clothes and wake everybody up. When we stopped, the Gurkhas were still groggy. They came stumbling out, helmets askew, and dragging their weapons. My guys

descended on them and hustled them onto the trucks. I ducked a CNN reporter with a quick ‘no comment’ and we got out of there.”¹⁷ The convoy went straight to the UN camp in Port-au-Prince.

In Haiti, the Nepalese battalion shared a compound with the Bangladeshi battalion. It was across the road from Warrior Base, the main U.S. facility and the headquarters for the 25th Infantry Division (25th ID). ODA 155 was joined by ODA 145, led by Chief Warrant Officer Three (CW3) Thomas C. Dawson. Another 1st SFG team, ODA 154, was already working with the Bangladeshis. The 1st Group teams were controlled by the 3rd Special Forces Group Commander, who was responsible for all SF teams in country.

“Our living conditions were primitive, but adequate. We lived in GP medium tents, six guys per tent. The tents had electricity so everyone had a fan,” said Randy Derr. “Whoever the genius was that put the Hindu Nepalese in the same small compound with the Muslim Bangladeshis had a warped sense of humor. You could feel the tension build five times a day during call to prayers which the Bangladeshis put out over a loudspeaker.”¹⁸ On more than one occasion the loudspeaker pole was chopped down by a Nepalese *kukri*.¹⁹

SFC Brian L. Jaenicke, the Team Sergeant for ODA 155, had deployed directly to Haiti from Fort Lewis with the rest of the team as the advance party for Haiti. Both ODA 155 and 145 were nearly at full strength and training started the day after the last lift arrived. “We had a thirty-day POI [Program of Instruction] established that concentrated on infantry tactics, particularly patrolling. We ran ranges, trained the Gurkhas on demo, mostly for EOD [explosive ordnance disposal] and on the communications they would use for missions,” said Jaenicke. “We did more



Marksmanship training with the Nepalese Army's Belgian FN rifles was a major portion of the Special Forces program of instruction in Haiti.



Pistol marksmanship with the U.S. M-1919 .45 caliber pistol. The slightly-built Nepalese soldiers braced themselves for the recoil of the pistol.

training on crowd control, detainee operations, and medical evacuations."²⁰ While the UN specified that participating nations provide operationally ready troops for peacekeeping missions, prudence dictated that the Nepalese receive further training before working in the politically sensitive arena of Haiti.

"SSG Rick [Richard] Hillyer put together a training program with the MPs [Military Police] from the 25th ID," said SFC Jaenicke. "They worked on crowd control with the riot equipment, shields, batons and formations."²¹ Medical training was geared toward casualty evacuation. "We did training on the medical evacuation [MEDEVAC] procedures and on loading and off-loading patients from a MEDEVAC helicopter," said SSG Derr. "We got air assets and the Gurkhas really seemed to enjoy the hot loading [using a running helicopter], especially the soldiers that got to go for a ride."²²

The Nepalese mission was two-fold; guard duty at the port facility of Port-au-Prince and security patrols throughout the city. The UN provided the Nepalese with



Training on loading and unloading MEDEVAC patients was part of the training in Haiti. It was particularly popular because the soldiers usually got a helicopter ride.

fifty white U.S.-made M-1009 Commercial Utility Cargo Vehicles (CUC-Vs). "We met a RORO [roll-on/roll-off] ship at the port and picked up 50 CUC-Vs," said CPT Carpenter. "They were all beat up, most had over 200,000 miles on them. We had all we could do to keep them running."²³ The SF had to give the Nepalese driver's training before using the vehicles.

The teams trained the Gurkhas intensively on mounted and dismounted patrolling techniques. "The Gurkha officers generally spoke some English, but we had to use interpreters with the soldiers," said SFC Brian Jaenicke. "The troops were good; the Nepalese Army had 'stacked the deck' with these guys. They were head and shoulders above the Bangladeshis in terms of professionalism and energy."²⁴ By the end of February, with the thirty-day training period completed, the Nepalese began to assume their share of the UNMIH operation.

*"The troops were good; the Nepalese Army had 'stacked the deck' with these guys... in terms of professionalism and energy."
—SFC Brian Jaenicke*

The guard mission at the harbor of Port-au-Prince involved patrolling the perimeter of the port facility, which was surrounded by a wall of shipping containers, stacked four high. The vast quantity of humanitarian aid flowing into the country made the port a prime target for thieves. Once off-loaded, the Gurkha troops escorted the convoys that went into the country to distribute the food and other aid. This was a fairly simple security mission and was easily handled by the Nepalese. Tougher were the presence patrols into all parts of the city to provide a semblance of law and order for the people. The worst were the patrols into Citi Soleil, the notorious Port-au-Prince slum home to more than 200,000 impoverished people.

Military Police from the U.S. 25th Infantry Division assisted the Special Forces teams in training the Nepalese on riot control procedures.



Safeguarding the tons of food and humanitarian aid that flowed into the port at Port-au-Prince was one of the missions given to the Nepalese. The port was cordoned off by a wall of shipping containers stacked four high, but active patrolling was needed to prevent thieves from entering the port facility.

“Our troops were out there to maintain civil order. We would send two SF guys with each patrol, which was under the control of a Nepalese lieutenant platoon leader,” said SFC Brian Jaenicke.²⁵ The Gurkhas responded well to the SF advisors and had little difficulty on the daytime patrols. Getting them to operate at night was another story.

“Like many soldiers from other countries, the Gurkhas were ‘solar powered’ and didn’t like to move around at night,” said CPT Maxey Carpenter. “It was a challenge to get them up for night patrols.”²⁶ The mystical culture of Haiti played a role in their reluctance. Night was when the practitioners of voodoo were active.

“It was pretty eerie, with the candles, costumes, and all. I’m not prone to superstition, but you could feel the evil in the air.”

—SFC Brian Jaenicke

“I was on a patrol one night that came upon a real-live voodoo ceremony,” said SFC Jaenicke. “It was pretty eerie, with the candles, costumes, and all. I’m not prone to superstition, but you could feel the evil in the air.”²⁷ The Gurkha presence patrol quietly left the area after this first-hand experience with the shadowy voodoo rituals of Haiti. The incredible poverty of the common people was emphasized when the Gurkhas were assigned the mission to guard the UN garbage trucks.

Daily garbage collection from the UN compound and the American bases resulted in several Haitian deaths during its disposal. When the trucks attempted to empty



25th Infantry Division SSI



The slums of Citi Soleil were patrolled by the Nepalese and their Special Forces advisors. The squalor and poverty of Citi Soleil was a shock even for the economically poor Nepalese.

their loads at the Port-au-Prince city dump, they were mobbed by the frenzied poor attempting to get at the choicest bits of refuse. After a number of people were crushed by bales of garbage, the Nepalese battalion was tasked to secure the dump when the trucks arrived.

“For a while we had the mission to accompany the garbage trucks to the dump,” recalls SSG Randy Derr. “Our Nepalese were responsible for establishing a cordon [in full riot control gear around each vehicle] so the trucks could dump their load of trash. After that, it was chaos as the Haitians fought over the garbage. It was absolutely crazy.”²⁸

ODAs 155 and 145 continued their advisory mission until April 1995, when the UN relocated the Nepalese contingent from Port-au-Prince to the smaller coastal city of Saint-Marc, fifty miles north of the capital. The 3rd Special Forces Group decided that a single ODA was sufficient. ODA 145 remained with the Nepalese until their national commitment ended in August 1995 and ODA 155 returned to Fort Lewis. Two weeks later, ODA 155 deployed to Exercise COBRA GOLD in Thailand.

The Special Forces mission in support of the Nepalese Army Gurkhas was somewhat unique, but in many ways typical. ODA 155 literally circled the globe by the time

they returned to Fort Lewis in April 1995. They lived and worked with the soldiers of one of the world's poorest nations and deployed with them on a mission to another even more destitute. No strangers to desperate poverty themselves, the Nepalese Gurkhas acquitted themselves well when confronted by chaos and violence in Haiti. While it was in many ways routine, the experience was a memorable one for ODA 155. ⬆

The author would like to thank COL Maxey Carpenter, CPT Randy Derr, and SGM Brian Jaenicke for their generous assistance in the preparation of this article.

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Endnotes

- 1 Nepalese Army in UN PKOs, http://www.nepalsearmy.mil.np/na_un.php.
- 2 History of Nepal, <https://www.thamel.com/htms/history.htm>.
- 3 An excellent source of information on the Gurkhas and their service in the British Army can be found in the works of John Masters. Masters served with the pre-War British Army in India, in the Gurkha regiments. His two volume autobiography recounts his wartime experiences and the history of the Gurkhas in the British Army. See John Masters, *Bugles and a Tiger: My Life in the Gurkhas* (New York: Viking Books, 1956); John Masters, *The Road Past Mandalay* (New York: Harper & Sons, 1961).



The Nepalese in full riot gear preparing to escort the garbage trucks into the city dump. Their training in crowd control was necessary to prevent riots and injuries at the dump.



The garbage dump at Port-au-Prince was the scene of several riots and injuries as the poverty-stricken Haitians fought over the garbage from the UN compounds.



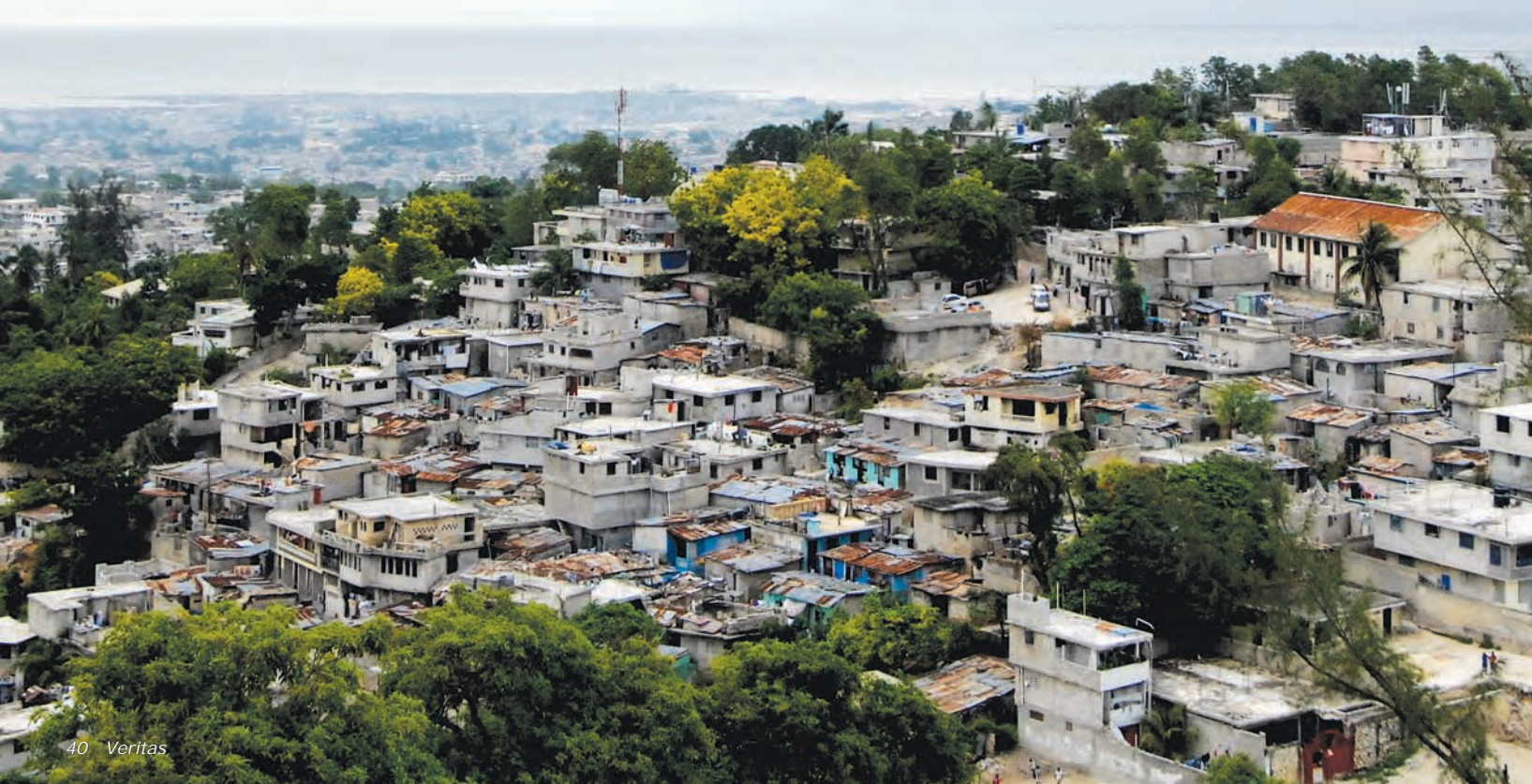
The Nepalese and their Special Forces advisor in full riot gear form a cordon around one of the garbage trucks at the Port-au-Prince dump. In poverty-stricken Haiti, the garbage from the UN and U.S. compounds was a treasure trove for the locals. (Illustration by Mariano Santillan)

- 4 Maxey B. Carpenter, ODA 155, 1st Special Forces Group, interview by Dr. Kenneth Finlayson, 9 April 2009, Missoula, MT, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC. *The 3,600-man Brigade of Gurkhas in the British Army annually selects roughly 300 out of thousands of applicants for service. The Indian Army has over 100,000 Gurkhas in 44 battalions. The salaries and pensions of the British Gurkhas are a significant source of income in the poor villages of Nepal.*
- 5 Brian L. Jaenicke, ODA 155, 1st Special Forces Group, interview by Dr. Kenneth Finlayson, 16 June 2009, Fort Bragg, NC, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 6 Randy Derr, ODA 155, 1st Special Forces Group, interview by Dr. Kenneth Finlayson, 13 July 2009, interview notes. USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC. *The Yak & Yeti Hotel with its famous Chimney Restaurant was established in 1947 by the legendary White Russian expatriate and former ballet dancer, Boris Lissanovitch. The entrepreneurial Lissanovitch was the one essential contact for Westerners in Kathmandu. The presence of borscht on the menu reflects his Russian heritage.*
- 7 Carpenter interview.
- 8 Derr interview.
- 9 Carpenter interview.
- 10 Derr interview.
- 11 Carpenter interview.
- 12 Carpenter interview.
- 13 Derr interview.
- 14 Carpenter interview.
- 15 Carpenter interview.
- 16 Carpenter interview.
- 17 Carpenter interview.
- 18 Derr interview.
- 19 Carpenter interview. *The kukri is the large curved knife that is the traditional symbol of the Gurkha soldier.*
- 20 Jaenicke interview.
- 21 Jaenicke interview.
- 22 Derr interview.
- 23 Carpenter interview.
- 24 Jaenicke interview.
- 25 Jaenicke interview.
- 26 Carpenter interview.
- 27 Jaenicke interview.
- 28 Derr interview.

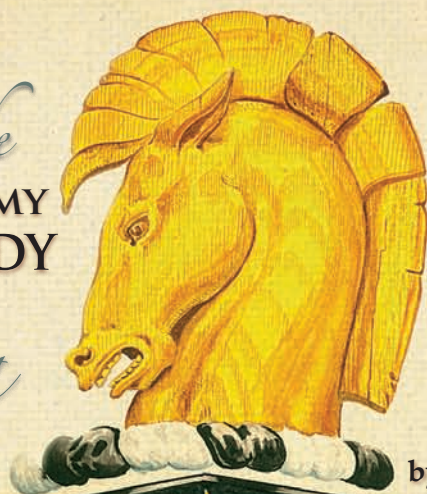
A street sign in Kathmandu. Little did the Nepalese know that defending garbage trucks would be one of their most important missions.



The Haitian capital city of Port-au-Prince.



A History of the
UNITED STATES ARMY
JOHN F. KENNEDY
SPECIAL WARFARE
SCHOOL
Insignia



by Troy J. Sacquety



DEVICE OF THE
PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE SCHOOL
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY, O.Q.M.G.
APPROVED FOR THE Q.M.G. DEC. 16, 1952

Arthur E. Dubois
ARTHUR E. DUBOIS, CHIEF, HERALDIC BRANCH

Although often not considered, military insignia usually reflect unit history and organizational changes over time. This is especially true for the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School (USAJFKSWCS). Each time an organization received a new name or was redesignated, the unit insignia had to be “redesignated” by the U.S. Army’s Institute of Heraldry. Often, this was not officially done until years afterwards and sometimes just to keep documentation straight. Typical of Army Special Operations, many insignia were worn before receiving official approval. This article will describe the progression of four USAJFKSWCS insignia; the Distinctive Unit Insignia (DUI); the Shoulder Sleeve Insignia (SSI); the beret flashes; and the parachute badge background trimmings, or “ovals.” Because the records regarding the creation of these insignia are scant, the *Veritas* staff welcomes any further information that readers might be able to provide.

The U.S. Army Psychological Warfare (PSYWAR) Center was formally activated on 29 May 1952 at Fort Bragg, NC. The units initially assigned to the PSYWAR Center were the U.S. Army PSYWAR School, the 6th Radio Broadcasting and Leaflet Group, the Psychological Warfare Board, and the 10th Special Forces Group. The mission of the PSYWAR Center was to “conduct individual training and supervise unit training in Psychological Warfare and Special Forces Operations; to develop and test Psychological Warfare and Special Operations doctrine, procedures, tactics, and techniques; [and] to test and evaluate equipment in Psychological Warfare and Special Forces Operations.”¹ The PSYWAR School’s two instructional divisions, the Psychological Warfare Department and the Special Forces Department, were organized to prepare soldiers to “perform those psychological warfare and special forces duties which they may be called upon to perform in

war.”² The School had no insignia when it was activated on 22 October 1952 at Fort Bragg, NC.³ A brief attempt was made to distinguish PSYWAR from SF during parades; the PSYWAR soldiers wore green ascots and the SF personnel wore red ones during these “Christmas” reviews. However, they still needed their own insignia.⁴

The DUI and Device

The PSYWAR School insignia, approved on 28 November 1952, was originally designed for “stationery, diplomas, and mural decorations.” In a slightly modified form, it was also adopted for wear as a DUI.⁵ The white, gray, and black on the shield symbolized the “different phases of psychological warfare activities.” Black also signified Special Operations.⁶ The torch in the center stood for “light, learning, liberty, and truth.” The horse, which is “universally recognized as a symbol of subversive activity . . . represents the Knight in chess, the only piece capable of moving indirectly and of striking from and within the enemy territory.” The motto, *Veritas et Libertas*, means “Truth and Freedom.”⁷ Then Second Lieutenant Caesar J. Civitella, a WWII Office of Strategic Services veteran and one of the first instructors in the SF Department of the PSYWAR School, thought that the Trojan Horse represented “a cunning way to infiltrate an enemy.”⁸ Over the years, the PSYWAR Center was renamed several times; in 1956 as the U.S. Army Special Warfare School and in 1964 as the U.S. Army Special Warfare Center.

On 7 June 1965, the Secretary of the Army approved the DUI for wear, centered on the School’s beret flash.⁹ This meant that only those assigned to the Special Warfare School could wear the DUI on their flash. Personnel assigned to Headquarters, U.S. Army John F.



The original PSYWAR center was located at the intersection of Reilly and Gruber Roads on Fort Bragg, NC. The headquarters building is the WWII barracks in the lower right corner.



The USAJFKSWC moved to John F. Kennedy Hall Building #D-3004 in 1965.



Caesar J. Civitella was assigned as one of the first SF instructors at the PSYWAR Center. During WWII, he had learned Unconventional Warfare by serving in Office of Strategic Services (OSS) Operational Groups in France and Italy. Here he is being decorated with the Bronze Star by OSS Chief, Major General William J. Donovan.

Kennedy Center for Special Warfare were not permitted to wear the DUI on their beret flash.¹⁰ (The USASOC History Office does not know which DUI, if any, they did wear. We welcome additional information on the subject. Please contact the author.) However, the DUI was still not enough to set the Schoolhouse soldiers apart.

The SSI

The second school-specific insignia that is still worn by personnel assigned to USAJFKSWCS is the SSI, approved on 22 October 1962.¹¹ It replaced the Continental Army Command (CONARC) SSI, worn with an airborne tab.¹² Prior to the CONARC patch, the School personnel wore the Third U.S. Army SSI and an airborne tab. As befitting a school whose original purpose was Psychological Warfare before being expanded to Special Warfare, the SSI has considerable meaning. The lamp represents education while its outline, referring to psychology, is a rendition of the Greek letter "Psi" [Ψ]. The flames emitting from the lamp symbolize "the three prime areas of instruction for which the School is responsible: Psychological Operations, Counterinsurgency, and Unconventional Warfare." The flames also imply "spoken and written words which are major tools of Psychological Warfare." Their placement simulates the heraldic delineation for "embattled," meaning ready for battle. The crossed arrows represent the "silence and stealth with which our early frontiersman fought . . . as well as the ingenuity, courage and survival by the usage of wasplike, yet devastating, attacks through the employment of irregular tactics, techniques and logistical support." Even



A.



B.



C.

A. United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School Device

B. An early (1950s) graphic form of the DUI.

C. United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School DUI

the colors have



D.



E.



F.

D. United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School SSI with Airborne Tab.

E. Third U. S. Army SSI with Unofficial Airborne Tab.

F. Continental Army Command SSI with Unofficial Airborne Tab.

“wisdom and prudence,” white, “perfection and faith,” and yellow, “constancy and inspiration.”¹³

The Beret Flashes and Parachute Badge Background Trimmings

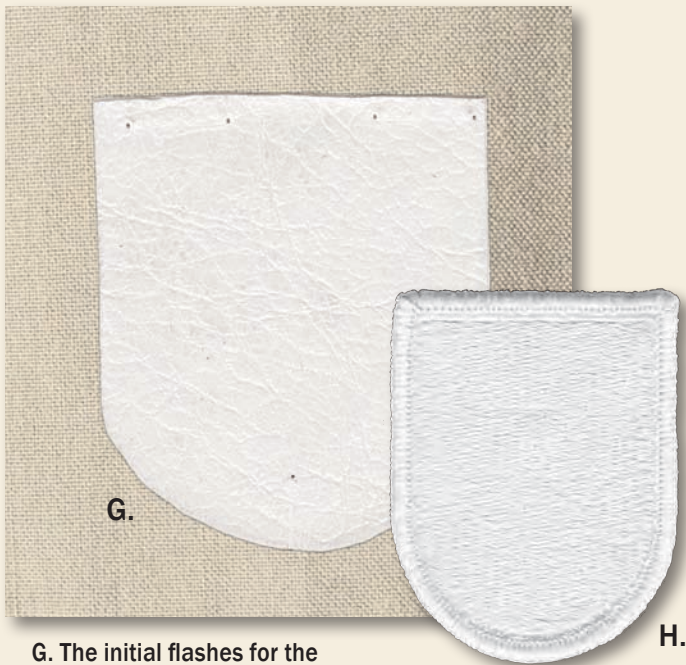
The final insignia worn by personnel assigned to the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School are the beret flashes and associated parachute badge background ovals. Because the 1st Special Warfare Training Group (Airborne) (1st SWTG (A)) is subordinate to the USAJFKSWCS, modifications of these insignia were difficult to unravel. The first official beret flash to be worn was that of the cadre of the Special Forces Training Group.¹⁴

Approved on 16 April 1962, white was chosen to represent the Special Forces Training Group because it was “representative of the singleness of purpose and the high standards required of the instructional personnel.”¹⁵ However, LTG William Yarborough said years later that the “SF School flash was to be White because the graduates were innocents who had not faced the realities of UW in real life situations.”¹⁶ Early flashes were often homemade from naugahyde or cut from Clorox bottles because they were easier to keep clean. The all-white flash was replaced on 26 November 1996 with that of the 1st SWTG (A).¹⁷ The parachute badge background trimming to accompany the new flash was approved for group wear on 19 November 2002. Prior to that, all 1st SWTG (A) training personnel wore the USAJFKSWCS parachute badge background trimming.¹⁸ A U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Center for Special Warfare flash came a few years after that of the Special Forces Training Group.

The beret flash for the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Center for Special Warfare was approved on 2 June 1965.¹⁹ Black, grey, and white were chosen to symbolize the phases of Special Warfare. The parachute badge background trimming to wear with this flash had been approved earlier on 7 January 1965.²⁰ Both the flash and the parachute badge background trimming remain distinctive to USAJFKSWCS.

The insignia of an organization is a window into a unit’s history. The design, changes, and staffing associated with each symbol are often forgotten. However, like all insignia, the original intent has always been to instill pride in a unit and to set these soldiers apart from others. These Army SOF insignia, while developed for a new military organization, have painstakingly evolved over nearly six decades. And, they are still worn with pride. ▲

I would like to thank USAJFKSWCS Chief Archivist Alejandro Lujan; JFK Special Warfare Museum Director Roxanne M. Merritt; Mary Dennings, Curator of Collections, Airborne Special Operations Museum; and Roy E. Cornwall of the U.S. Army Institute of Heraldry for their assistance with this article.



G. The initial flashes for the Special Forces Training Group were made of naugahyde. This example is in the collection of the USAJFKSWC Archives.

H. Later examples were cloth.

meaning: black symbolizes



I. 1st Special Warfare Training Group Flash.

J. 1st Special Warfare Training Group Parachute Background Trimming.



K. United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School Flash.

L. United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School Parachute Background Trimming.

Troy J. Sacquety earned an MA from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln and his PhD in Military History from Texas A&M University. Prior to joining the USASOC History Office staff he worked several years for the Central Intelligence Agency. Current research interests include Army and Office of Strategic Services (OSS) special operations during World War II, and Special Operations units in Vietnam.

Endnotes

- 1 Alfred H. Paddock, Jr., *U.S. Army Special Warfare: Its Origins* (Lawrence, Kansas, University Press of Kansas, 2002), 140.
- 2 Paddock, *U.S. Army Special Warfare*, 141.
- 3 Paddock, *U.S. Army Special Warfare*, 141.
- 4 Allan H. Smith interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 1 June 2009, notes, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 5 "Device and Distinctive Insignia for the Psychological Warfare School," 28 November 1952, copy in USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 6 Scan of front page of 1953 Psychological Warfare Center yearbook, found in USAJFK Special Warfare Center ARSOF Archives, 2326.1987.001, location: stack 3, section 2, shelf 2, box 3, folder 25.
- 7 "Device and Distinctive Insignia for the Psychological Warfare School," 28 November 1952, copy in USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 8 MAJ (ret) Caesar J. Civitella, telephone interview by Dr. Troy J. Sacquety, 2 June 2009, Fort Bragg, NC, notes, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Ft. Bragg, NC.
- 9 J.C. Chadwick, "Authorization for Wear of Distinctive Flash," 7 June 1965, found in USAJFK Special Warfare Center ARSOF Archives, 2326.1987.001, location: stack 3, section 2, shelf 2, box 3, folder 25. **The DUI was redesignated on 13 March 1962 (retroactive to 18 September 1957) when the Psychological Warfare Center was renamed the U.S. Army Special Warfare School.** LTC G. W. Dundas, "Distinctive Insignia for the US Army Institute for Military Assistance," 23 March 1970, found in USAJFK Special Warfare Center ARSOF Archives, 2326.1987.001, location: stack 3, section 2, shelf 2, box 3, folder 25.
- 10 **The DUI was once again redesignated on 23 March 1970, this time to reflect the name change to the U.S. Army Institute for Military Assistance. Its final redesignation came on 26 August 1981, as the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Center for Military Assistance.** COL Gerald T. Luchino, "Distinctive Unit Insignia for the US Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center," 21 February 1984, found in USAJFK Special Warfare Center ARSOF Archives, 2326.1987.001, location: stack 3, section 2, shelf 2, box 3, folder 25.
- 11 COL Gerald T. Luchino, "Shoulder Sleeve Insignia for the US Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center," 21 February 1984, found in USAJFK Special Warfare Center ARSOF Archives, 2326.1987.001, location: stack 3, section 2, shelf 2, box 3, folder 25. **The SSI was redesignated on 3 August 1964 and 25 July 1969 for the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Center for Special Warfare.**
- 12 Geoffrey T. Barker, "Patches and Flashes of the Special Forces," in *Special Forces: The First Fifty Years* (Tampa, FL: Special Forces Association, 2002), 282.
- 13 COL Gerald T. Luchino, "Shoulder Sleeve Insignia for the US Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center," 21 February 1984, found in USAJFK Special Warfare Center ARSOF Archives, 2326.1987.001, location: stack 3, section 2, shelf 2, box 3, folder 25.
- 14 MG J.C. Lambert, "Wearing of the Beret and Special Forces Patches," 16 April 1962, found in USAJFK Special Warfare Center ARSOF Archives, 2326.1987.001, location: stack 3, section 2, shelf 2, box 3, folder 25. **Not until 28 October 1981 was the flash officially approved by the U.S. Army for the Special Forces School. It was redesignated on 10 March 1992 for wear by personnel assigned to the Special Operations School per <http://www.tioh.hqda.pentagon.mil/FlashTrim/Special%20Operations%20School.htm>, accessed 10 July 2009.**
- 15 LTC Eb W. Smith, "Request for Authorization to Wear White Flash," 31 March 1965, found in USAJFK Special Warfare Center ARSOF Archives, 2326.1987.001, location: stack 3, section 2, shelf 2, box 3, folder 25.
- 16 Mr. Harry Pugh, email to Dr. Troy Sacquety, 13 April 2009, SUBJECT: SF Beret Flash Note, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 17 <http://www.tioh.hqda.pentagon.mil/FlashTrim/ISpecialWarfareTrainingGroupFlashTrim.htm>, accessed 10 July 2009.

The United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School Name Progression from 1950 to 2009:

The United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center has gone through several name changes from 1950-2009.

1950: Psychological Warfare Department established at Fort Riley, KS.

1952: Transferred to Fort Bragg, NC; Redesignated as the Psychological Warfare (PSYWAR) Center.

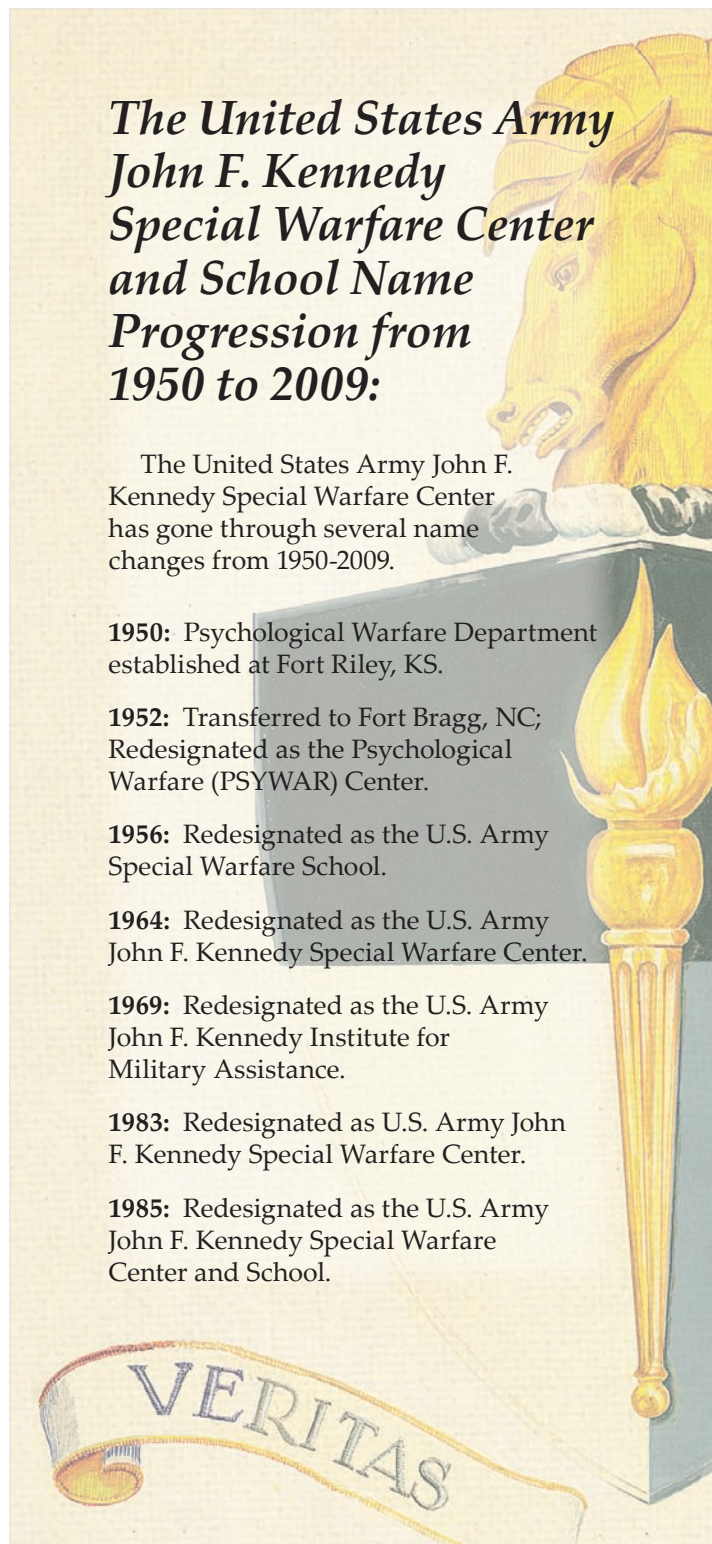
1956: Redesignated as the U.S. Army Special Warfare School.

1964: Redesignated as the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center.

1969: Redesignated as the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Institute for Military Assistance.

1983: Redesignated as U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center.

1985: Redesignated as the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School.



18 <http://www.tioh.hqda.pentagon.mil/FlashTrim/ISpecialWarfareTrainingGroupFlashTrim.htm>, accessed 13 July 2009.

19 COL Richard H. Allen, "Special Forces Flash for the US Army Institute for Military Assistance," 28 October 1981, found in USAJFK Special Warfare Center ARSOF Archives, 2326.1987.001, location: stack 3, section 2, shelf 2, box 3, folder 25.

20 <http://www.tioh.hqda.pentagon.mil/FlashTrim/US%20Army%20JFK%20Special%20Warfare%20Center.htm>, accessed 13 July 2009.

The 77TH SFG Mission to South Vietnam: 1960

By Eugene G. Piasecki



In 1954, in accordance with the Geneva Accords, a separate military agreement between France and the Ho Chi Minh-led Viet Minh ended the fighting between the Communist Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the French Expeditionary Corps. Vietnam was partitioned at the 17th parallel. The Viet Minh withdrew north of the parallel and French forces to the south. New military equipment fielding and French troop strength was capped. Only replacements could enter South Vietnam and the general elections would be supervised by a United Nations International Control Commission (ICC). India, Poland, and Canada formed the ICC.¹ From 1955 to 1960, internal political and military instability in the south did not go unnoticed by North Vietnam. The Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) in the 1950s mirrored the post Korean-War American Army organization and was trained to conduct conventional operations against Communist invasion by North Vietnamese Regular Army forces. Little consideration was given to counterguerrilla warfare.

Capitalizing on the situation, North Vietnamese-sponsored Viet Cong (VC) guerrilla forces in South Vietnam escalated their insurgency in 1959, targeting military and political infrastructure. President Ngo Dinh Diem saw the need for dedicated counterinsurgency forces and asked Lieutenant General (LTG) Samuel T. "Hanging Sam" Williams, Chief, Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG), Vietnam for help. The purpose of this article is to explain the 77th Special Forces Group's MTT (Mobile Training Team) mission to train selected Vietnamese officers and noncommissioned officers as the ARVN Ranger cadre to develop a counterinsurgency capability for South Vietnam.

On 15 February 1960, before LTG Williams could respond, President Diem ordered ARVN division and military regional commanders to form Ranger companies from Army, Reserve, Retiree, and Civil Guard volunteers. Diem wanted each 131-man Ranger Company to have an 11-man headquarters section and three 40-man rifle platoons. By presidential directive, South Vietnamese commanders were ordered to have 50 of these Ranger Companies formed by early March 1960. Diem envisioned having a Ranger company in all thirty-two military regions and the remaining eighteen companies spread through the regular ARVN divisions.² LTG Williams and General Isaac D. White, Commander of the U.S. Army Pacific disagreed; however, Elbridge Durbrow, U. S. Ambassador, supported Diem and sent a message to the Department of State outlining his position on 2 March 1960. The Department of Defense was asked to support. Anticipating future military requirements for Southeast Asia, the Army Chief of Staff, General Lyman L. Lemnitzer, directed the staff to develop courses of action to provide increased assistance to South Vietnam.

The Army Staff recommended sending a Special Forces Mobile Training Team (MTT) to train the Ranger cadre as long as the SF presence in Vietnam would not exceed



President Dwight D. Eisenhower and Secretary of State John Foster Dulles greeting Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem on his visit to the USA in 1957. Arriving in Eisenhower's personal airplane, Diem was hailed as the "Savior of Southeast Asia" by the president.

LTG Samuel T. "Hanging Sam" Williams. A Veteran of WWI, WWII, and Korea he was the Chief, Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG), Vietnam from 18 November 1955 to 1 September 1960.



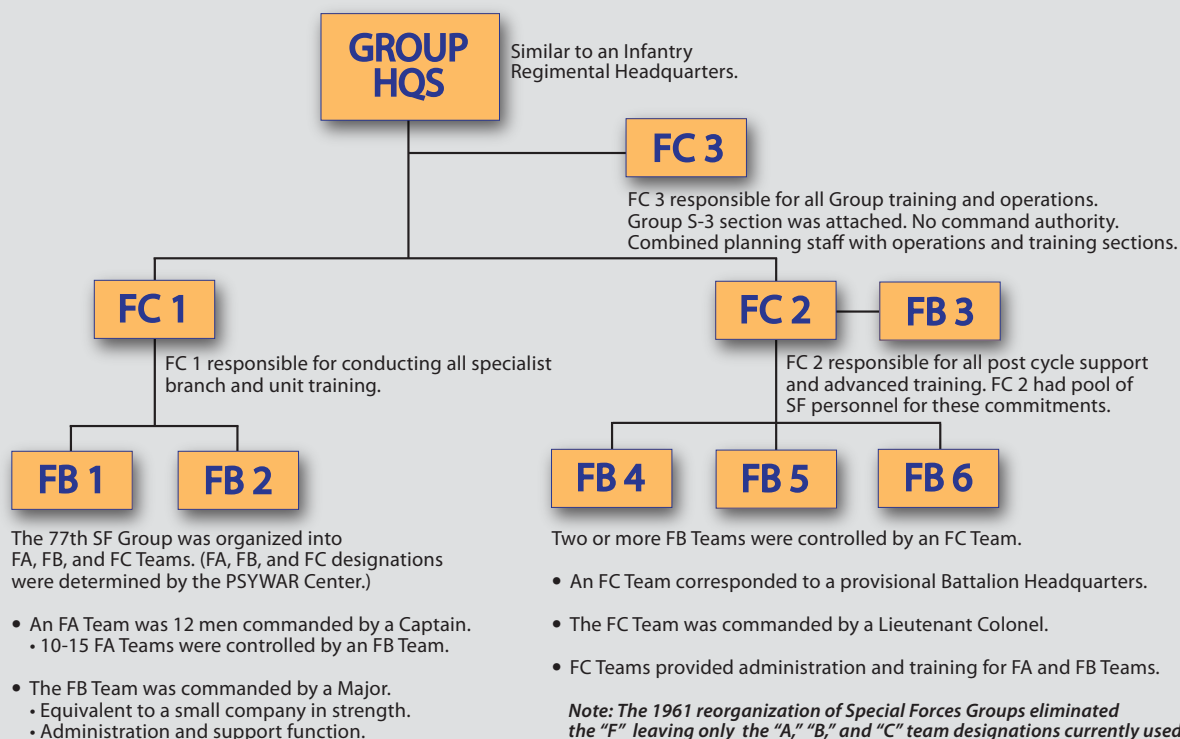
Ambassador to South Vietnam Elbridge Durbrow. Appointed in March 1957, he supported Diem's plan to increase the ARVN by 20,000 soldiers at a cost of \$28 million dollars.

Colonel Donald D. Blackburn was the Commander, 77th Special Forces Group from October 1958 to August 1960. During his command, the 77th not only performed this mission, but also conducted Operation WHITE STAR in Laos.



Lieutenant Colonel William Ewald. Returning from an assignment as the U.S. Advisor to the Royal Thai Infantry School on 16 February 1960, he was given command of FC 1, 77th SFG, and went to South Vietnam as the commander of the mobile training team.

77th SFG Organizational Chart 1960



77TH SFG Organizational Diagram. This Special Forces Group organization was established by the Psychological Warfare Center and based upon WWII OSS Operational Groups. This lasted until 1961 when SF Groups were restructured prior to becoming heavily involved in South Vietnam.



Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG), Vietnam Headquarters located on Tran Hung Dao Boulevard in Saigon. This is the location where LTG Williams, COL Blackburn, and LTC Ewald initially discussed mission training requirements.

the maximum number of U.S. advisors established by the Geneva Accords.³ That issue was resolved by sending Special Forces to Vietnam on temporary duty (TDY) tours lasting less than 180 days.⁴ On 5 April 1960, the 77th Special Forces Group (SFG), at Fort Bragg, North Carolina was tasked to train ARVN officers and noncommissioned officers in tactics and techniques essential for conducting

anti-guerrilla warfare. Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) William Ewald, commander of FC-1 was to command the MTT.⁵ All assigned personnel were screened by LTC Ewald and 77th SFG senior leaders to select those best qualified for the mission. The fifteen officers and fifteen noncommissioned officers then began an intensive pre-deployment training program. This included an area study, language and weapons training, military occupation skill (MOS) cross-training; and identification and development of administrative and logistical deployment requirements.⁶ On 22 April 1960, an advance planning party of Colonel (COL) Donald D. Blackburn, the 77th SFG Commander, and LTC Ewald, Chief of the MTT, left Fort Bragg, NC for Saigon, arriving four days later.

This was not Blackburn's first trip to Vietnam or of serving with LTG Williams. In 1957, Blackburn became the senior advisor to the Vietnamese Commanding General of the 5th Military Region (Mekong Delta). At that time, LTG Williams was the Chief, MAAG, Vietnam.⁷ This assignment became Blackburn's primer on Vietnam. As he would discover, his experiences during this tour prepared him for many of the situations he would encounter in later Vietnam assignments. Most



Colonel (RET) William Ewald

112TH Field Artillery.

Enlisted in 1938 at age 17 in Battery E, 112th Field Artillery (horse-drawn 75mm cannon) New Jersey Army National Guard. The 112th was federalized on 27 January 1941 and shipped to Fort Bragg, North Carolina on 8 February 1941. In 1942 at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, 1SG Ewald was selected to attend Officer Candidate School at Fort Knox, Kentucky.



On 12 December 1942, Second Lieutenant (2LT) Ewald was commissioned in the infantry and assigned to the 13th Armored Division as a tank platoon leader. A fluent German language speaker, he volunteered for a classified project, was sent to Fort Ritchie, Maryland, and trained as an interrogator.

9TH Infantry Division.

In October 1943 he was an interrogator in Prisoner of War Enclosure Number One in Broadway, England. In early 1944, Captain (CPT) Ewald was assigned to the G-2 Section of the 9th Infantry Division (9th ID) and landed on Omaha Beach on 10 June 1944 (D+4).



39TH & 47TH Infantry Regiments.

From 10 June 1944 through 8 May 1945 (VE Day) CPT Ewald served as the Regimental S-2 intelligence officer and interrogator in the 39th and 47th Infantry Regiments and became the 39th Regimental S-2 until the 9th ID returned to the United States.



26TH Infantry Regiment.

As a member of the U.S. Army European Occupation forces, Major (MAJ) Ewald served as the S-2, 2nd Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division until 1946.



141ST/142ND Infantry Regiments and 41st Armored Infantry Battalion (AIB).

Between 1946 and 1948, Ewald advised the 141st/142nd Infantry Regiments of the Texas Army National Guard and served as the executive officer of the 41st Armored Infantry Battalion (AIB), 2nd Armored Division.



Infantry School. After Texas, MAJ Ewald was assigned to the Infantry School at Fort Benning, Georgia and completed the Infantry Officer's Advanced Course in 1949 and Airborne Training in June 1950.



188TH & 503RD Parachute Infantry Regiments.

In September 1950, MAJ Ewald was assigned as the interim battalion commander and then executive officer of the 188th Parachute Infantry Regiment (PIR), 11th Airborne Division, Fort Campbell, Kentucky. Later he became executive officer of the 2nd Battalion, 503rd PIR (the "Shamrock Battalion") commanded by LTC Jack T. "Black Jack" Shannon. In March 1952 while commanding 3rd Battalion, 503rd PIR, he volunteered for Special Forces.



Trojan Horse. LTC Ewald arrived at Fort Bragg, NC in September 1952 and was assigned to the 10th Special Forces Group (SFG) with special duty with the Counterinsurgency Department, Special Forces Department, Psychological Warfare Center. In February 1953, he was assigned as Commander, FC 1, 10th SFG and Director, 10th SFG's Field Exercises. In November 1953, he deployed with the 10th SFG to Germany and remained there until 1956.



LTC Ewald returned to the United States in 1956 to attend the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College (CGSC). After CGSC, he was assigned to Fort McPherson, Georgia, as the 3rd Army Chief of Infantry Unit Combat Arms Branch until 29 January 1959 when he went to Thailand as the U.S. Advisor to the Royal Thai Infantry School.

77TH SFG. Returning to Fort Bragg on 16 February 1960, LTC Ewald assumed command of FC 1, 77th SFG. In March, the 77th SFG, commanded by COL Donald D. Blackburn, was alerted to form a Mobile Training Team (MTT) to go to South Vietnam. The MTT's mission from April through November 1960 was to train selected South Vietnamese officers and noncommissioned officers as cadre for the ARVN Ranger Companies. LTC Ewald was the MTT's first volunteer and commander.

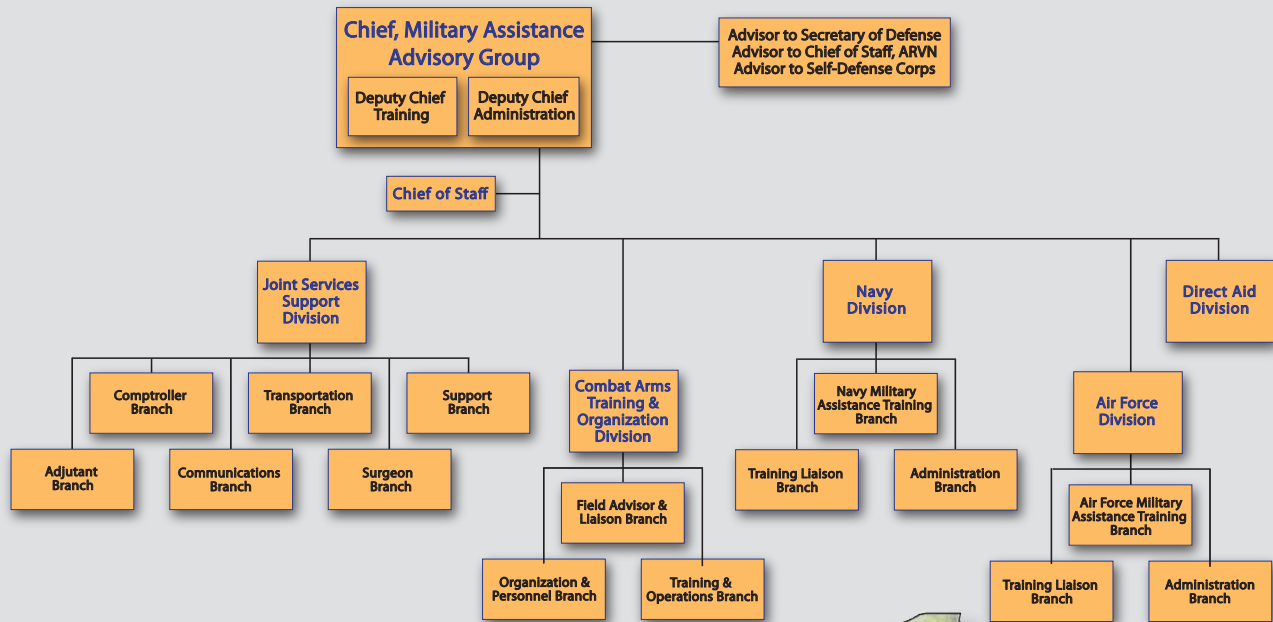


After the MTT, LTC Ewald returned to the PSYWAR Center and became the director of the Special Forces Division's Unconventional Warfare Department and later the Counterinsurgency Department. In August 1962 he was ordered to Fort Belvoir, Virginia to the Special Warfare Doctrine and Equipment Group.

He remained at Fort Belvoir until 1965 when he was posted to Hawaii for duty as a CINCPAC J-5 (Plans) officer for the South East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO). In 1968, LTC Ewald volunteered for duty in Vietnam and became an advisor to the 21st ARVN Division at Ca Mau in the IV Corps area.

Having completed one six-month tour extension in Vietnam in 1969, his second request was denied because of the Army's mandatory retirement policy. His final assignment was as the advisor to the 300th Military Police Command in Lavonia, Michigan. On his retirement date of 15 May 1971, COL William Ewald's service totaled thirty years, five months and sixteen days.

The Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG), Vietnam Organization



The Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG), Vietnam organization. The MAAG was a joint service group whose mission was to administer the U.S. military assistance and planning program in Vietnam.

noteworthy was that in the ARVN, decision making was centralized and all military and operational forces were personally directed from Saigon by President Diem.⁸ ARVN and territorial units were not very well trained and civil guard (rural police) training was being conducted by American civilian police advisors contracted under the USAID program. In 1958 when Blackburn left Vietnam, he realized the units with the potential for use as internal security were being dissolved, and neither military nor paramilitary forces were associated with the civil guard.⁹ When Blackburn returned to Vietnam in 1960, the situation had not changed significantly even though LTG Williams was still the MAAG Chief.

At their initial meeting, LTG Williams told Blackburn and Ewald that President Diem was holding him personally responsible for the plan to train selected

MAAG field headquarters in Nha Trang. This is where the SF Command and Control group of the MTT conducted the majority of their coordination activities.



Prior to 1960, South Vietnam was divided into military regions. Each region also corresponded to a separate MAAG-supported U.S. advisory organization.





At Song Mao ARVN Rangers learn how to conduct a river patrol in rubber assault boats.



SFC Virgil Murphy (indicated by arrow) conducts demolition training at Nha Trang.



MSG Howard Kristofferson (L) and MSG Gregory A. Matteo (R) demonstrate how to construct a poncho raft.



Proper assembly, disassembly, and functioning of individual weapons was a key element in the training program.

Hours of Instruction

225 Hours	Field Problems
99 Hours	Individual Training
36 Hours	Weapons Training
27 Hours	Small Unit Training
20 Hours	Physical Training
16 Hours	Instructor's Time ¹

Endnote

¹ LTC William Ewald, 77th Special Forces Group, *Chief MAAG, Staff and Senior Advisors Status of Training Program Briefing*, 26 May 1960, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, 1.



An ARVN Ranger crosses an improvised two-rope bridge at Song Mao.



Hand-to-Hand combat supplemented physical training and instilled self-confidence.

Training Teams Special Forces Mission Vietnam 1960

SONG MAO

MAJ Kenneth R. Beard [Team Chief]
CPT Jack Spital
CPT Reynold E. Price
1LT Freddie H. Boyd
MSG (E-7) Kenneth R. Chadwick [Wpns]
SFC (E-7) George D. Roraback
SFC (E-6) Earl M. Peckham
SSG (E-6) Wylie H. Newton
SGT (E-5) Charles W. Allen [Commo]
CPT Fuselier [Intelligence]*
1LT Perez [PSYWAR]*

DA NANG

MAJ Melbourne G. Slade [Team Chief]
CPT James W. Jones
CPT Hall W. Crimmett
CPT Rudolph Kaiser
1LT Gerard M. Wynn
MSG (E-7) James W. Schumacher
MSG (E-7) Wiley W. Gray
SFC (E-6) Henry H. Jones
SFC (E-6) Thomas J. Wood
SGT Earl S. Flowers [Medic]
CPT Snyder [Intelligence]*
SFC Walter [PSYWAR]*

SAIGON

CPT Mills [CA/Mil Gov]*

NHA TRANG

COMMAND AND CONTROL GROUP

LTC William Ewald
CPT Elmer E. Monger

TRAINING TEAM

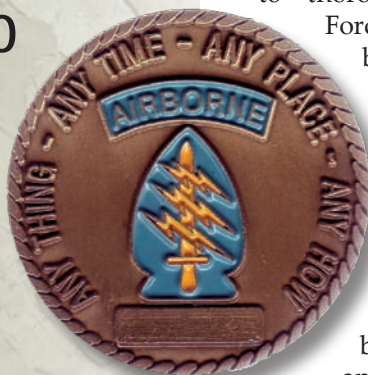
CPT Raymond L. Call [Team Chief]
CPT Jamie R. Hendrix
CPT George E. Carr
1LT Ronald K. Summers
MSG (E-7) Jacques A. Standing
MSG (E-8) Gregory A. Matteo [Medic]
MSG (E-7) Howard Kristofferson
SFC (E-7) Virgil Murphy [Engineer]
SFC (E-7) Robert G. Grisham
MAJ Marcotte [Intelligence]
{701st CIC Det, Fort Bragg}*
CPT McConnanghey [PSYWAR]*

NOTE: Each SF Training Team was assigned an Operations, Weapons, Engineer, Medical and Communications Non-commissioned Officer. Operations, Personnel, Intelligence and Supply Officer duties were performed by SF Team Officers.

** At the time of publication, accurate identification of these personnel was still in progress.*

Endnote

1 LTC William Ewald, FCI, 77th Special Forces Group, letter to MAJ Louis T. Dorogi, 15 September 1977, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.



77th Special Forces
Group (ABN)
Challenge Coin

ARVN personnel to support an internal security force country-wide. As a result, Williams directed Blackburn to thoroughly coordinate the proposed Special Forces' training plan with the MAAG staff before he received it.¹⁰ On 28 April 1960 with little information and assistance from Williams' staff, Blackburn submitted his memorandum to the MAAG Chief of Staff. He presented his recommendations on the SF MTT missions. Blackburn proposed a seven-week training cycle much like that used by the Eighth Army Ranger Company in Korea in 1950.¹¹ There would be one training site in the 5th Military Region; and the first training cycle would start on 1 July 1960 to allow adequate preparation time.¹² The memorandum did not please LTG Williams.

Blackburn's assessment that the Vietnamese could not shoot or patrol, knew little or nothing about small unit actions and were poorly led implied that he, Williams, had failed.¹³ Blackburn said that he was "trying to be objective." They resolved several issues and differences and reduced the seven week cycle to four weeks by changing the type and amount of training. Overall this would achieve the same results, but in less time.¹⁴ COL Blackburn gave his revised plan to LTG Williams and LTC Ewald and left for the U.S. on 5 May 1960.

LTC Ewald had already started making adjustments. He knew that adequate training time would be the rarest resource. Two mission elements could not be changed: the 77th Special Forces MTT with the remaining fourteen officers, fifteen non-commissioned officers and attachments would begin departing from Fort Bragg on 7 May 1960. Da Nang, Nha Trang, and Song Mao were the Ranger Training Stations selected by the Vietnamese Army.¹⁵ The ARVN I Corps, Second Military Region Headquarters, and 1st Field Division were at Da Nang; the ARVN 3rd Field Division was located at Song Mao and at Nha Trang, the former French Commando School was to be used as the ARVN Physical Training and Ranger Schools base.¹⁶ Ewald visited all three locations to identify the best sites for administrative, billeting, and training areas.¹⁷ The final training plan, approved on 10 May 1960, directed a four-week training program (423 training hours; no weekend or holiday breaks) and four cycles.¹⁸ It began on 6 June 1960.

The SF Training Teams arrived in three separate groups: the first on 13 May 1960; the second and third on 18 May 1960. After their initial briefings from the MTT Command and Control Group in Saigon, the teams moved to their respective Ranger Training Stations. By 20 May 1960 all the teams were preparing classes at their training sites.¹⁹ Each team consisted of four Special Forces officers, five Special Forces non-commissioned officers, one Intelligence officer and one Psychological Warfare specialist. Additionally, English-speaking Vietnamese assistant instructors/interpreters supported the teams (twelve each in Song Mao and Da Nang and sixteen in



A typical battalion or company patrol base outside Nha Trang.



ARVN Rangers learned to move through all types of terrain. Here they conduct a jungle approach march near Nha Trang.



An ARVN Ranger buddy team practicing swamp firing techniques at Nha Trang.

Types of Training Conducted at the Ranger Training Camps

- Day and Night Distance Compass Courses
- Long Range Patrol Courses
- Realistic, Arduous Swamp Movement Courses
- Immediate Action Combat Live-Fire Ranges
- Advanced Marksmanship Transition Ranges
- Jungle Combat Live-Fire Ranges
- Selected Ambush and Raid Problem Areas
- Traversing Rugged Terrain
- Establishment of a Battalion/ Company Patrol Base¹

Endnote

¹ Ewald, Chief MAAG Training Status Brief, 2.



A lesson learned from the French experience was to always be prepared to react to vehicular ambushes.



SF instructors demonstrate rappelling to Vietnamese Rangers at Nha Trang.

Nha Trang). The MTT Command and Control Group, LTC Ewald and his deputy, CPT Elmer E. Monger, remained at Nha Trang to coordinate with the MAAG, provide direction and policy guidance, and control the Intelligence and Psychological Warfare training in the Ranger Training Program.²⁰ Capitalizing on time management and training site preparation were the Teams' top priorities.

LTG Williams emphasized his support in the MAAG-Vietnam *CHIEFS BULLETIN* No. 64 (22 May 1960). In *U.S.-Conducted Ranger Courses*, he explained the program's significance, the cost to the American and Vietnamese Governments, and the final objective to the MAAG Staff and the American advisors assigned to Vietnamese combat units. He stressed that unnecessary administrative delays or other "red-tape" would not be tolerated. Problems that could not be immediately resolved were to be brought to the personal attention of the Deputy Chief MAAG (Training) and himself.²¹ LTG Williams' intent was made very clear: "This is the first instance in Vietnam in which U.S. Military personnel will act as instructors as contrast to Advisors. Nothing, without exception, will be allowed to jeopardize their success."²² The one factor that the MAAG Chief had not considered in his training guidance was the quality of the soldiers provided for Ranger training.

LTG Williams' standard, "a top-flight Officer or EM [enlisted man], in superb physical condition and capable of instructing in his parent unit on completion of the course," was not met by the ARVN commands.²³ The enlisted "volunteers" recalled from reserve status, averaged thirty-six years of age and many had medical problems and lacked motivation.²⁴ The other active military trainees ranged in age from officers in their middle twenties to non-commissioned officers as old as fifty. Adding to the problem, the average Vietnamese had poor upper body strength and limited physical endurance. Students in all cycles were sent home for physical problems or inability to keep up. Student education levels varied from a few years of grade school to college graduates.

The SF Trainers soon confirmed COL Blackburn's earlier assessment. The Vietnamese students were not aggressive and lacked self-confidence, and the will to win. They intensely disliked night, jungle, and swamp operations regardless of prior combat experience with the French. Compounding the problem, the majority of the Vietnamese soldiers did not have a basic knowledge of military tactics, weapons, map reading, land navigation, patrolling, squad through company tactics, and lacked individual discipline.²⁵ Fortunately, many of these issues were overcome as the SF training progressed and the soldiers learned that they could do things they had never done. Ewald attributed this success to the Special

Forces trainers: "Observing U.S. officers and senior non-commissioned officers performing manual labor, manhandling equipment, getting down on the ground, doing, showing, coaxing and correcting, most of the time sweaty and dirty yet enthusiastic, that was the stimuli needed."²⁶ The quality of students had less impact on training than equipment and supply shortages.

Since maintenance was not a priority in the ARVN units, the equipment issued was in poor condition, and often inoperable. From the beginning, the mission experienced equipment problems. Despite the efforts of the Temporary Equipment Recovery Mission (TERM) to provide the SF trainers the best equipment available, vehicles were old, worn out, poorly maintained, and broke down constantly. The majority of the rubber boats available had been improperly stored. Inflatable bladders

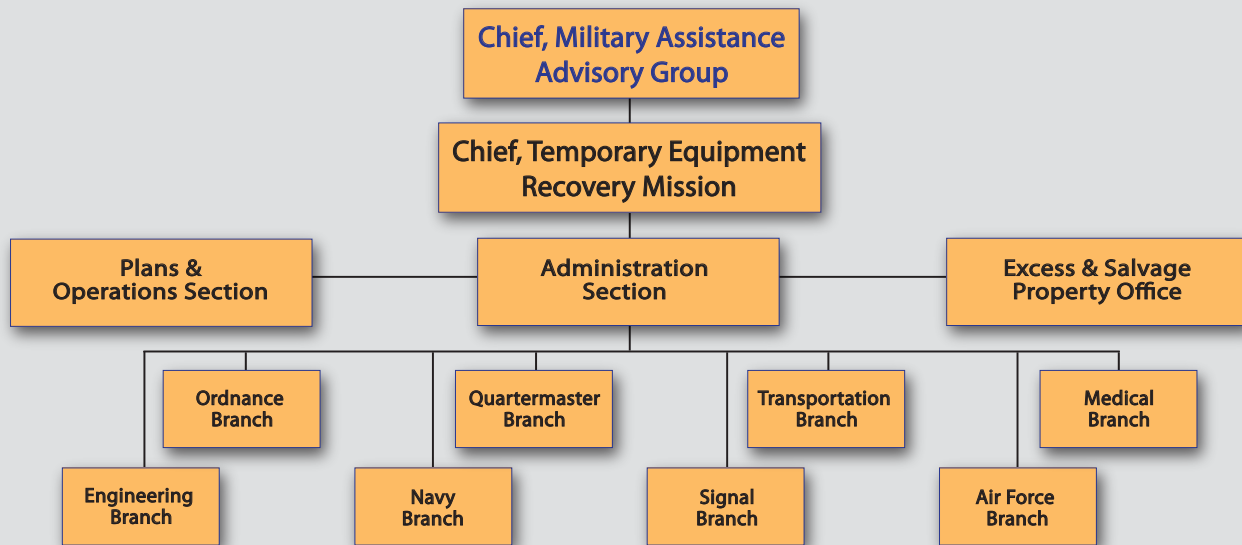
"Observing U.S. officers and senior non-commissioned officers performing manual labor, manhandling equipment, getting down on the ground, doing, showing, coaxing and correcting, most of the time sweaty and dirty yet enthusiastic, that was the stimuli needed."
— LTC William Ewald

had dry-rotted and would not hold air. Replacement metal assault boats were unwieldy and too heavy. Outboard motors rarely worked. At one training site, all the French compasses were inoperable. At least half of the telephones needed repair at another camp.²⁷ Equipment problems were eventually resolved by issuing replacements from U.S. stocks. The greatest danger to the American trainers and Vietnamese students was defective munitions.

In 1960, the Vietnamese Army still had ammunition supplies dating back to the French Colonial era. Ammunition and explosives were being replenished with U.S. stocks as they were used. These old French munitions were provided to the Ranger training camps. Most of it had been improperly stored and maintained and was dangerously unreliable. The 60mm mortar rounds were rusty and corroded. They were also inaccurate and produced a lot of duds. Fragmentation hand grenades were in the same condition and only half of the French grenades detonated. They would explode any time between five seconds and ten minutes after being thrown. Beginning with the second training cycle only U.S. grenades were used. French military and commercial blasting caps, trip flares, and booby trap simulators were also defective and had to be exchanged for American items. At the end of the first cycle, the MAAG and the Special Forces team commanders decided that only U.S. ammunition and explosives would be used.²⁸ It was only after these changes were made and facilities improved that the second training cycle began.

The POI for Cycle 2 mirrored that of Cycle 1. SF Team members continued to present all the instruction

The Temporary Equipment Recovery Mission (TERM), Vietnam Organization



The Temporary Equipment Recovery Mission (TERM) Vietnam organization. The TERM initially was formed to supervise the recovery and shipment of excess U.S. equipment. As the situation in Vietnam developed, TERM personnel managed less equipment and became logistics advisers to the ARVN.

with Vietnamese assistant instructors as interpreters. During Cycle 3 the trainer roles were reversed. Vietnamese assistant instructors and earlier cycle graduates presented all classes and performed administrative and logistical duties while the Special Forces personnel acted as supervisors/advisors.²⁹ The Americans were so impressed with their Vietnamese counterparts' performance during Cycle 3 that they felt the Vietnamese were ready to assume full responsibility for the Ranger Training Program. With Vietnamese instructors doing all classes, the Special Forces Training Teams were able to provide three days of specialized training to the enlisted men of the five Ranger Companies in Nha Trang and medical, communications, and demolitions classes to the Vietnamese 1st Observation Group (an original ARVN Special Forces unit).³⁰ The successful transition enabled the American SF Trainers to begin preparations to return to the U.S.

All U.S. Army field manuals (FM), technical manuals (TM), training literature, and other expendable items brought by the instructor teams from Fort Bragg were left behind. To ensure quality of training



Officers of the 1st Vietnamese Observation Group (VOG) at Nha Trang, South Vietnam waiting to make a parachute jump. The VOG was the forerunner of the *Lac Luong Dac Biet* (LLDB), the South Vietnamese Special Forces, and was formed after a 1st SFG mobile training team mission to South Vietnam in 1957.

during the Vietnamese-conducted 4th Ranger Training Cycle, LTC Ewald remained in Nha Trang and kept one Special Forces officer and non-commissioned officer at each training site.³¹ By early October 1960, the majority of the 77th MTT had left the country. When Cycle 4 ended on 15 November 1960, the remaining MTT personnel gathered in Saigon to fly back to Fort Bragg.

Overshadowed somewhat by Operation WHITE STAR in Laos (July 1959 - October 1962), the SF MTT to South Vietnam in 1960 was an important milestone in U. S. Army Special Forces history. LTC Ewald returned to Fort Bragg to become the Director of the Unconventional Warfare and Counterinsurgency Departments in the Special Forces Division at the PSYWAR Center. He brought back four valuable "Lessons Learned" to share with the 7th SFG (the redesignated 77th SFG), those men in SF training and the newly activated 5th SFG. The tactics, techniques, and procedures developed during the

1960 mission would be applied by other Special Forces soldiers as the American presence in South Vietnam escalated during the Kennedy Administration.

“Lessons Learned”

LTC William Ewald

1. **The impact of the mission on Special Forces.** “This is the finest peace time training that SF personnel can get. Here we no longer deal in theory. Here our personnel face the acid test of how to get along with the indigenous people, how to put across instruction when faced with a language barrier, how to improvise and still get the job accomplished. It clearly indicates to each individual his weak points and *emphasises [sic] more and more the need for cross-trained individuals and the need for mature soldiers with broad experience.* It gives each individual a chance to exercise his imagination to the maximum, and, what is most important to your command, who can cut it and who just doesn’t have the stuff.”³²

2. **How capable is the ARVN soldier?** “With few exceptions, the average student officer and non-commissioned officer lacked aggressiveness, initiative, self-confidence and the will to win. Team work was foreign to them and they were noticeably weak in their knowledge of weapons, basic military tactics, patrolling, night operations, orders, map reading and land navigation, intelligence security, and communications. Mentally and physically they were not accustomed to long hours of hard training and they were physically weak in their arms, shoulders and abdomen. Despite this they possessed the ability to learn and in most cases proved very receptive to instruction.”³³

3. **SF Trainers must review, revise and adjust Programs of Instruction (POI) to fit the needs of the soldiers being trained.** “The program of instruction is not the Ranger training program as is presented by the United States Army Infantry School. It is a program which combines basic, individual, and advanced infantry training, subjects peculiar to anti-guerrilla warfare, and a certain number of the confidence-type courses and patrol problems applicable to Ranger training. Emphasis was placed on approximately 90% practical work, and 10% classroom. The initial training cycle of 4 weeks did not provide enough time to properly train the average student for his assigned mission.”³⁴

4. **MAAG and ARVN support was essential to mission success.** “Great credit must be given to the MAAG and ARVN senior leadership and the Chief, Temporary Equipment Recovery Mission (TERM) and his staff for getting adequate and timely logistical support to the training sites. The Combined Arms Training and Organization Division (CATO) handled all the problems from the training sites that could not be resolved in the field. The Quartermaster Aerial Resupply Company, Field Service Support, Finance, Aviation Section, Special Services and Adjutant General Section never failed to provide what was needed.”³⁵

In 1960, most Americans knew very little about Vietnam except that it was located somewhere in Asia and had once been a French colony. The Ranger Training mission from April to November 1960 changed some attitudes toward Special Forces and dispelled some perceptions about the insurgency in Vietnam and SF operational methods. Special Forces was then only eight years old. LTC Ewald’s comments should not be taken lightly. He was a World War II veteran who earned two Silver Stars. Most importantly, he recognized the future potential for Special Forces. “It is my honest belief that every SF operator who successfully completes one of these missions will be well qualified for operational missions should that time ever come. I also feel that missions of this nature will more then [sic] ever point out the importance of Special Forces to the top command and that it will assure us the added top command support that has been sorely lacking in past years.”³⁶ Little did LTC Ewald realize how prophetic his comments would be, then and today.

The author would like to express his sincere thanks to COL (Retired) William Ewald, COL (Retired) William R. Ewald, COL (Retired) Jamie R. Hendrix, Mr. Dave Feters, Mr. Louis Dorogi, Mr. Leonard D. Blessing, Jr. and Mr. Alejandro Lujan for their unselfishness and patience in providing their time, assistance, and advice in preparing this article. ♣

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Endnotes

- 1 Ronald H. Spector, *United States Army in Vietnam. Advice and Support: The Early Years 1941-1960* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History United States Army, 1985), 219.
- 2 Spector, *United States Army in Vietnam: The Early Years 1941-1960*, 349.
- 3 Spector, *United States Army in Vietnam: The Early Years 1941-1960*, 256.
- 4 Spector, *United States Army in Vietnam: The Early Years 1941-1960*, 354.
- 5 COL William Ewald, former Commander FC 1, 77th SFG, telephonic interview by Eugene G. Piasecki, 5 May 2009, Fort Bragg, NC, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC. **The Special Forces Team concept had its origins with the WWII OSS Operational Groups. In 1952, the operational teams, known as FA Teams, were originally composed of fifteen men, but later reduced to the familiar 12-man A Team recognized in today’s Special Forces Groups. When asked about the origins of the term FA, FB, and FC for teams assigned to the 77th Special Forces Group, COL William Ewald stated that the designations were determined by the PSYWAR Center and assigned to the Group’s internal organizations. The 1961 reorganization of the Special Forces Group eliminated the letter “F” from in front of the team organizations leaving only the A, B, and C Team designations currently in use.**
- 6 LTC William Ewald, 77th Special Forces Group, Airborne, *After Action Report (AAR)-Special Forces Mission Vietnam 1960*, undated, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC. Hereafter known as Ewald AAR.
- 7 LTC Robert B. Smith, *Senior Officers Oral History Program, Project 83-9, Brigadier General(ret) Donald D. Blackburn, Volume II* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: US Army Military History Institute, 1983), 267. Hereafter referred to as Blackburn Interview.

- 8 Blackburn Interview, 274-275.
- 9 Blackburn Interview, 276. When Blackburn returned to Vietnam in late 1960 after turning over command of the 77th SFG, he learned that the Ranger cadre that had been trained during the MTT was guarding village province chiefs, ammo dumps, fuel dumps and bridges. Blackburn Interview, 293.
- 10 Blackburn Interview, 281.
- 11 Robert W. Black, *Rangers in Korea* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1989), 15.
- 12 COL Donald D. Blackburn, Commander, 77th Special Forces Group, Memorandum for Chief MAAG, *Special Forces Training Mission*, 28 April 1960, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 13 These observations were confirmed by Colonel (Retired) Jamie R. Hendrix in a telephone conversation with the author on 2 June 2009. COL Hendrix had previously served as one of LTG "Hanging Sam" Williams' subordinate officers when Williams commanded the 25th Infantry Division during the Korean War from July 1952 to June 1953.
- 14 Blackburn Interview, 284.
- 15 The attachments for this mission included three intelligence officers and three PSYWAR specialists. Intelligence training by Major (MAJ) Marcotte and Captains (CPT) Fuselier and Snyder of the 701st CIC Detachment, Fort Bragg focused on weaknesses in tactical intelligence gathering. The thirty-nine hour program was given to thirty specially-selected Ranger graduates at each training site during the training cycle-breaks. At the time of publication, no information was available on the type and amount of PSYWAR training that was conducted during the MTT. Telephonic conversation between Colonel (ret) William Ewald and the author on 13 August 2009.
- 16 Spector, *United States Army in Vietnam: The Early Years 1941-1960*, 289-290.
- 17 Ewald, AAR, 2.
- 18 Ewald, AAR, 2 and Blackburn Interview, 284.
- 19 Ewald, AAR, 2.
- 20 LTC William Ewald, 77th Special Forces Group, Airborne, *Standard Operating Procedures For Ranger Training*, 26 May 1960, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, 1. Hereafter known as Ranger Training SOP. As a point of interest the U.S. Army had been assigning advisors to the South Vietnamese armed forces since 1957.
- 21 LTG Samuel T. Williams, Chief, MAAG-Vietnam, CHIEFS BULLETIN No. 64: *U.S.-Conducted Ranger Courses*, 22 May 1960, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC. Hereafter known as CHIEFS BULLETIN No. 64.
- 22 LTG Williams, CHIEFS BULLETIN No. 64.
- 23 LTG Williams, CHIEFS BULLETIN No. 64.
- 24 Ewald letter to Blackburn, 22 June 1960.
- 25 Ewald, AAR, 5.
- 26 Ewald, AAR, 4.
- 27 Ewald, AAR, 6.
- 28 Ewald, AAR, 7-8.
- 29 Ewald, AAR, 8-9; Chief MAAG Training Status Brief, 2.
- 30 Ewald, AAR, 9.
- 31 Ewald, AAR, 9.
- 32 Ewald letter to Blackburn, 29 June 1960.
- 33 Ewald, AAR, 10-11.
- 34 Ewald, AAR, 12.
- 35 Ewald, AAR, 12. The Chief of the Combat Army Training Organization (CATO) functioned as a type of operations staff for the Chief, MAAG and controlled all the MAAG field detachments assigned to Vietnamese schools and commands. He was also the rating officer for all advisors except those senior to him despite only infrequently observing the advisory detachments while they were in the field. The Temporary Equipment Recovery Mission (TERM) was intended as an interim solution to supervise recovery and shipment of excess equipment while assisting ARVN in improving its logistical capability. Over time, the recovery mission became less important than providing strictly logistical advisers and advice to ARVN while freeing members of the advisory group from supply matters to conduct operational and staff training.
- 36 Ewald, letter to Blackburn, 29 June 1960.



The average Vietnamese had poor upper body strength and limited physical endurance. Obstacle courses were designed to build individual strength and stamina.



History in the "Raw"

by Troy J. Sacquety

The historians on the USASOC History staff often encounter intriguing SOF photos, documents, and memorabilia that require more research and cross-referencing before an article can be proposed. Many fascinating photographs that detail lesser-known aspects of ARSOF history are part of the closed collections. We wanted to share some of these "raw" historical materials. This is designed to prompt more veterans and family members to let the *Veritas* staff scan their photographs and records. This presentation of "raw" history explains a post-WWII intelligence unit, the Strategic Services Unit (SSU). These photographs illustrate a little-known intelligence mission after Japan surrendered. *Thank you, John S. DiBlasi.*

When President Harry S. Truman dissolved the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) on 1 October 1945, its operational personnel were transferred to the SSU, a newly created unit in the War Department. The SSU inherited the remaining OSS missions still in the field. One intelligence team was on the former Japanese colony of Formosa, now known as Taiwan. As part of the Japanese surrender, Formosa was transferred to

This cloth insignia, known as a "chit," assisted Allied airmen downed in enemy occupied China. The writing on the back offered a reward for delivering the serviceman safely to Allied forces. OSS personnel often carried such chits when serving in enemy-occupied territory.



Formosa Mission Patch

Nationalist China. Japanese civilians and soldiers on Formosa had to be shipped back to Japan. The task of the Formosa Mission was to monitor the repatriation of the surrendered Japanese military.

The repatriation of disarmed soldiers and civilians to Japan and the return of foreign "slave" laborers to their home countries was an enormous task not completed until 1949. On Formosa alone, 479,050 soldiers and civilians had to be transported back to Japan.¹ The relocations were effected by the Shipping Control Authority for the Japanese Merchant Marine (SCAJAP), which used

Cpl. John S. DiBlasi in 1945. He originally joined the Army Air Forces before volunteering for OSS. Because he had earned a radio license before the war, the OSS Communications Branch was a natural fit.



The 5329th Air Ground Forces Resourced Technical Staff (AGFRTS) was a joint OSS/14th U.S. Army Air Force intelligence organization. The 14th tied its lineage directly to Major General Clair L. Chennault's original "Flying Tigers," the American Volunteer Group, which gained fame early in the war.





When they had time off, the personnel of the Formosa Mission explored the island's rugged hills. Visiting the foul-smelling hot sulfur springs was common.



Ex-Kempeitai (Japanese military police) served as guards for the Formosa Mission to forestall thievery.

demilitarized Japanese warships and decommissioned U.S. Liberty cargo ships and LSTs (Landing Ship, Tank) manned by Japanese seamen. By 12 April 1946, the repatriations from Formosa were essentially finished.²

The Formosa Mission was a five-man SSU team led by a major. The commander coordinated with the Japanese and Chinese authorities to track the number of soldiers repatriated daily. Its radio station, call sign "RAM," reported this information to SSU headquarters. Radioman Corporal John S. DiBlasi, detailed to the OSS/SSU from the U.S. Army Air Forces, sent those messages to Washington. The radio station was in the mission headquarters, an appropriated, functioning Geisha house.³ Cpl. DiBlasi was assigned to the Formosa Mission to accrue overseas points.

During the war, he had served as a radio operator with OSS/China on the SALEM Mission (Station PWF). SALEM was one of the teams supporting the joint OSS/14th Army Air Forces organization, the 5329th Air Ground Forces Resources Technical Staff (AGFRTS), popularly known as "Agfighters." Their mission was to supply tactical air and ground intelligence to the 14th Air Force. Because the



LT William Lawson (l) and DiBlasi (r) stand by the SSU Formosa Mission jeep.

area of operations for the 14th Air Force was enormous, the OSS established networks of agents to supply target data. AGFRTS was so successful that its initial mission kept being expanded. From deep in enemy controlled territory, the organization provided weather reports and bomb damage assessments, monitored Japanese shipping, and operated an escape and evasion network for downed airmen. In February 1945 the OSS assumed control of AGFRTS. The organization grew to include most OSS branches, including propaganda, counter-intelligence, and intelligence analysis.⁴ When the war ended, Cpl. DiBlasi had not earned enough "points" to come home yet. He volunteered for the Formosa Mission. This enabled a friend who did have enough points to return to the States.⁵ As the repatriation effort in Formosa was ending, the SSU morphed into another element.

By mid-1946, SSU had been folded into a new organization, the Central Intelligence Group (CIG), which became the CIA with the passage of the National Defense Act of 1947. Since Army SOF roots are intertwined with the OSS veterans that made up early Special Forces, it is appropriate to consider the SSU a legacy unit. The SSU performed an important interim mission in the turbulent post-war period that triggered the Cold War. ▲

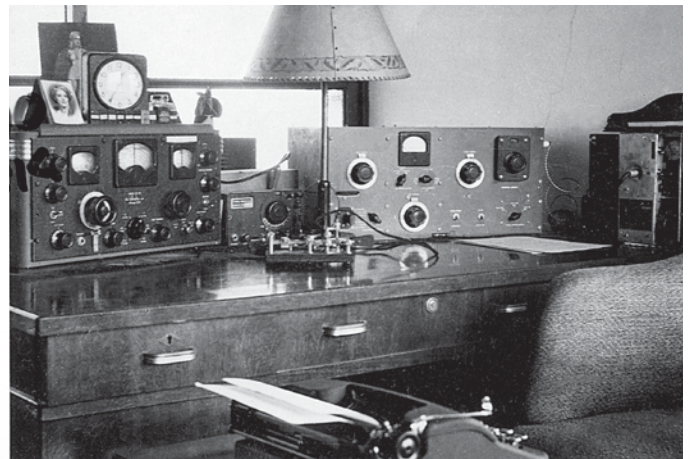


Staff personnel at station PWF at SALEM collected and reported intelligence on Japanese shipping, targets, and troop movements by radio to Kunming, China, for action by the 14th Air Force and U.S. Pacific Fleet.

The role of the Formosa Mission was to monitor the repatriation of Japanese soldiers. More than 479,000 soldiers and civilians were returned to Japan by mid-1946.



Since the headquarters of the Formosa Mission was an appropriated Japanese *Geisha* house, they received a lot of high-level Allied "visitors."



Station RAM's radio setup.

When DiBlasi arrived on Formosa, evidence of the Japanese military was everywhere. These Japanese fighter planes, likely *Mitsubishi A6M "Zeros,"* were corroding on an airfield. Had the war continued, they likely would have become *Kamikazes*. Many *Kamikaze* airplanes crashed into the U.S. fleet during the battle for Okinawa. They caused 5,000 U.S. Navy deaths.





After Japan surrendered in August 1945, the colossal effort to repatriate soldiers and civilians back to their homelands remained. This included getting Japanese troops and civilians back to Japan, as well as getting "guest" laborers in Japan back to their countries of origin. The numbers were hard to fathom; 5,103,300 needed to get to Japan and 1,152,650 foreign nationals in Japan had to get back to their home countries. A post-war U.S. Army history summed it up as a "a waterborne migration in scope without parallel in history," in which the only uncompleted aspect was the repatriation of more than 1,300,000 Japanese estimated to be held by the Soviets at the time. This map, from the *Reports of General MacArthur: MacArthur in Japan: The Occupation: Military Phase: Volume I Supplement*, gives an idea of the sheer magnitude of people involved in the repatriation effort.



DiBlasi at his radio while with the OSS in China.

An OSS radio operator transcribes an incoming Morse Code message on a typewriter. He then decoded the text to read the message.



Troy J. Sacquety earned an MA from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln and his PhD in Military History from Texas A&M University. Prior to joining the USASOC History Office staff he worked several years for the Central Intelligence Agency. Current research interests include Army and Office of Strategic Services (OSS) special operations during World War II, and Special Operations units in Vietnam.

Endnotes

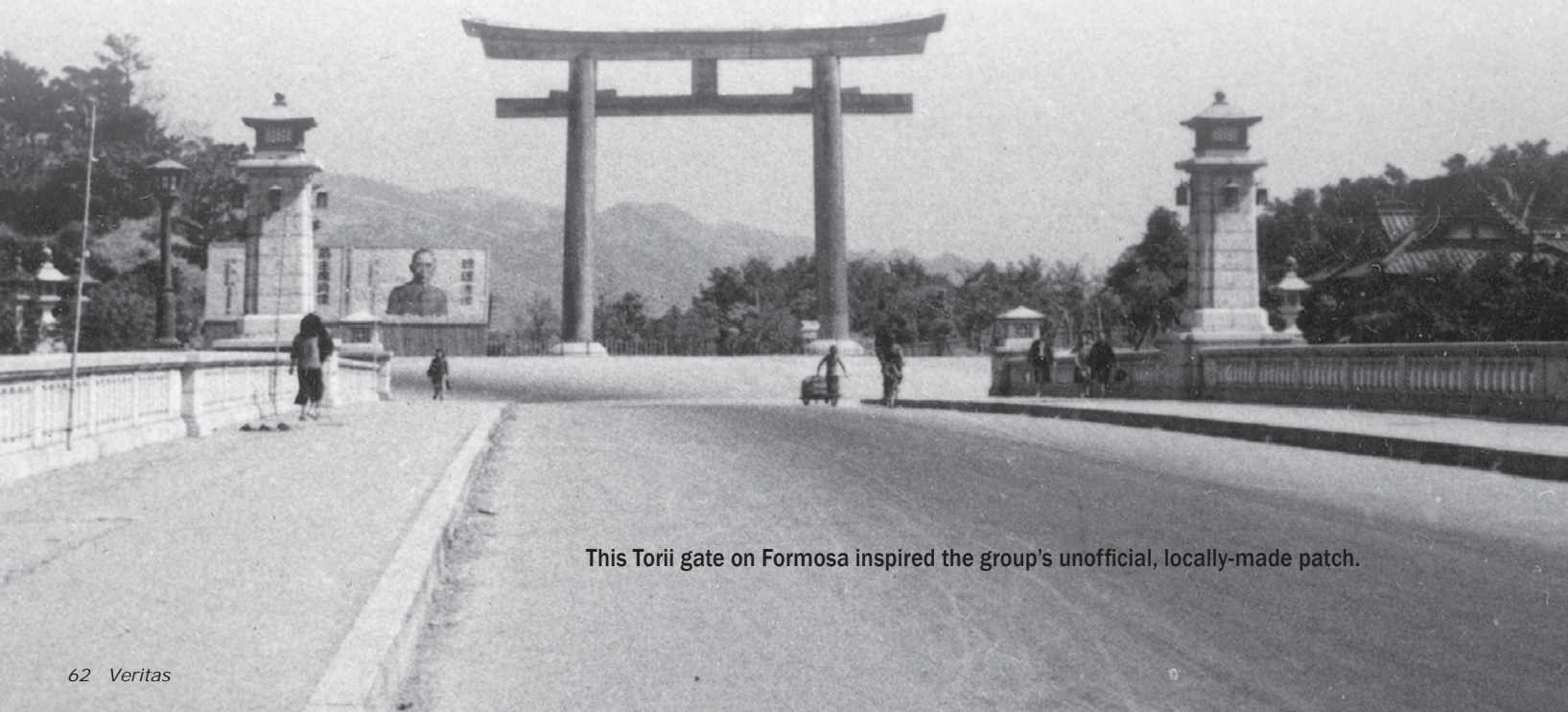
- 1 GEN Douglas A. MacArthur's General Staff, *Reports of General MacArthur: MacArthur in Japan: The Occupation: Military Phase; Volume I Supplement* (Washington D.C: Center of Military History, 1996), 170.
- 2 GEN MacArthur's Staff, *Reports of General MacArthur: MacArthur in Japan: The Occupation: Military Phase; Volume I Supplement*, 154-155.
- 3 John S. DiBlasi, telephone interviewed by Dr. Troy J. Sacquety, 12 February 2008, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 4 Kermit Roosevelt, *The War Report of the OSS: The Overseas Targets* (Washington D.C: Carrollton Press, 1976), 428-430.
- 5 John S. DiBlasi, "Military History of John S. DiBlasi," 13 August 1998, copy in the USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.



The SSU Formosa Mission was based in an appropriated Geisha house. Japanese culture predominated in Formosa which had been a colony since 1895.



The Formosa Mission hosted many visitors eager to relax and watch the Geisha dancers.



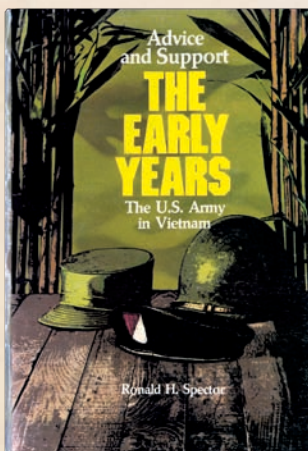
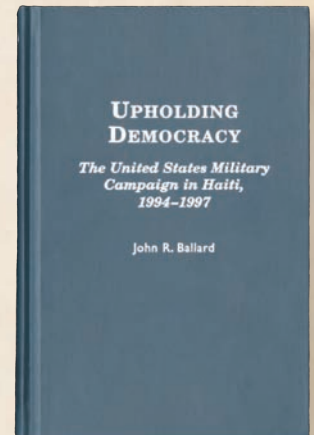
This Torii gate on Formosa inspired the group's unofficial, locally-made patch.

Books in the Field

"Books in the Field" provides short descriptions of books related to subjects covered in the current issue of Veritas. Readers are encouraged to use these recommendations as a starting point for individual study on Army Special Operations history topics.

John R. Ballard, *Upholding Democracy, The United States Military Campaign in Haiti, 1994-1997* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1998)

John R. Ballard's *Upholding Democracy, The United States Military Campaign in Haiti, 1994-1997* is a comprehensive look at the events surrounding the overthrow of the government of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and the subsequent U.S. and United Nations involvement that became Operation UPHOLD DEMOCRACY. The book provides an overview of Haitian history that gives the background necessary to understand the complex culture and politics of the country. Ballard covers the U.S. pre-invasion contingency planning, the missions of the Joint Task Forces 180 and 190 in the invasion and follow-on operations, and the transition to United Nations control. The book is well-researched and heavily annotated and includes individual interviews by both the author and other historians. Contains appendices, endnotes, maps, glossary, bibliography, and photographs.

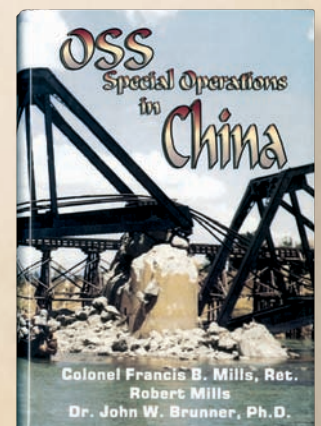


Ronald H. Spector, *United States Army in Vietnam. Advice and Support: The Early Years 1941-1960* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History United States Army, 1983)

In this work, Ronald H. Spector provides a view of the initial U.S. Army involvement in Vietnam from Presidents Franklin D. Roosevelt to Dwight D. Eisenhower. Starting with U.S. assistance to Ho Chi Minh during World War II, he describes a program of military advice and assistance to the French government and the start of U.S. involvement including the development of the American advisory program and the 1954 Geneva Accords. Spector provides examples ranging from high-level policy decisions to low-echelon field advisory operations illustrating how American actions in Vietnam were shaped more by the decisions of those in Saigon than by those in Washington. While researching this book, Spector had access to various official records, unofficial records and personal collections. Strengths of this book include use of personal interviews to corroborate his research. Included are photos, notes, maps, and an index.

COL Francis B. Mills, Robert Mills and Dr. John W. Brunner, *OSS Special Operations in China* (Williamstown, NJ: Phillips publications, 2002).

Much has been written about Office of Strategic Services (OSS) Operations in Europe during WWII. However, coverage of the extensive OSS operations in the Far East has been weak. In China, Burma, and Indo-China, the OSS conducted some of its most successful wartime operations. *OSS Special Operations in China* is an important contribution to the literature on this neglected theater. The authors, two of which served with the OSS in China, researched veteran memoirs and archival sources to detail the activities of the Special Operations (SO) Branch in China. Although no citations are used, they have included numerous SO Team after-action reports in the text so that the reader can assess the missions first-hand. Although the book does not cover the full extent of SO operations in China, at present it is the best available source. Includes photographs, appendix, maps and index, but no footnotes.





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Upcoming Articles...

The 10th Group's Trojan Horse Badge

by Troy J. Sacquety

The original Special Forces Group, the 10th SFG, had no insignia with which to distinguish them from other units. In 1955, Captain Roger M. Pezzelle of the 10th Special Forces Group at Bad Tolz, Germany set out to create one specifically for the Group. He designed the Trojan Horse badge for wear on the then unofficial Green Beret. It was approved the Cdr, 10th SFG for theater wear through 1962. This article details the creation and wear of the 10th SFG's unique beret badge.



An ARSOF Team Effort: Special Forces, Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Teams in Deh Rawod, Afghanistan

by Kenneth Finlayson

In 2009 in the Afghan town of Deh Rawod in Uruzgan Province, a well-coordinated effort by a Special Forces Operational Detachment-Alpha, a Civil Affairs Team, and a Tactical PSYOP Team significantly improved the conditions in this former Taliban stronghold. Through operations that enhanced the security of the local inhabitants, an extensive reconstruction effort, and an orchestrated public information campaign, the teams made great strides in improving the economic infrastructure and educational opportunities in the district. Working closely with the Coalition forces and the Afghan National Army and Police, the mission in Deh Rawod is a example of the successful fusion of these distinct ARSOF units.

The MARS Task Force: A Primer

by Troy J. Sacquety

The China-Burma-India Theater had a plethora of Special Operations units, many of them unheralded. One such unit was the 5332nd Brigade (Provisional), more commonly known as the MARS Task Force. Designed as a long-range penetration unit, the MARS Task Force was composed of the 475th Infantry Regiment (a U.S. Army Ranger legacy unit), the federalized Texas National Guard's 124th Cavalry Regiment and the 612th and 613th Field Artillery Battalions (Pack). The MARS Task Force was critical in securing the Burma Road following the capture of Myitkyina in August 1944. In this action, First Lieutenant Jack L. Knight became the only special operations soldier to earn a Medal of Honor in WWII. In April 1945, the unit was transported to China. There, it trained Chinese Army units before being disbanded. The article gives the reader a "snapshot" view of the composition, mission and service of the MARS Task Force.

